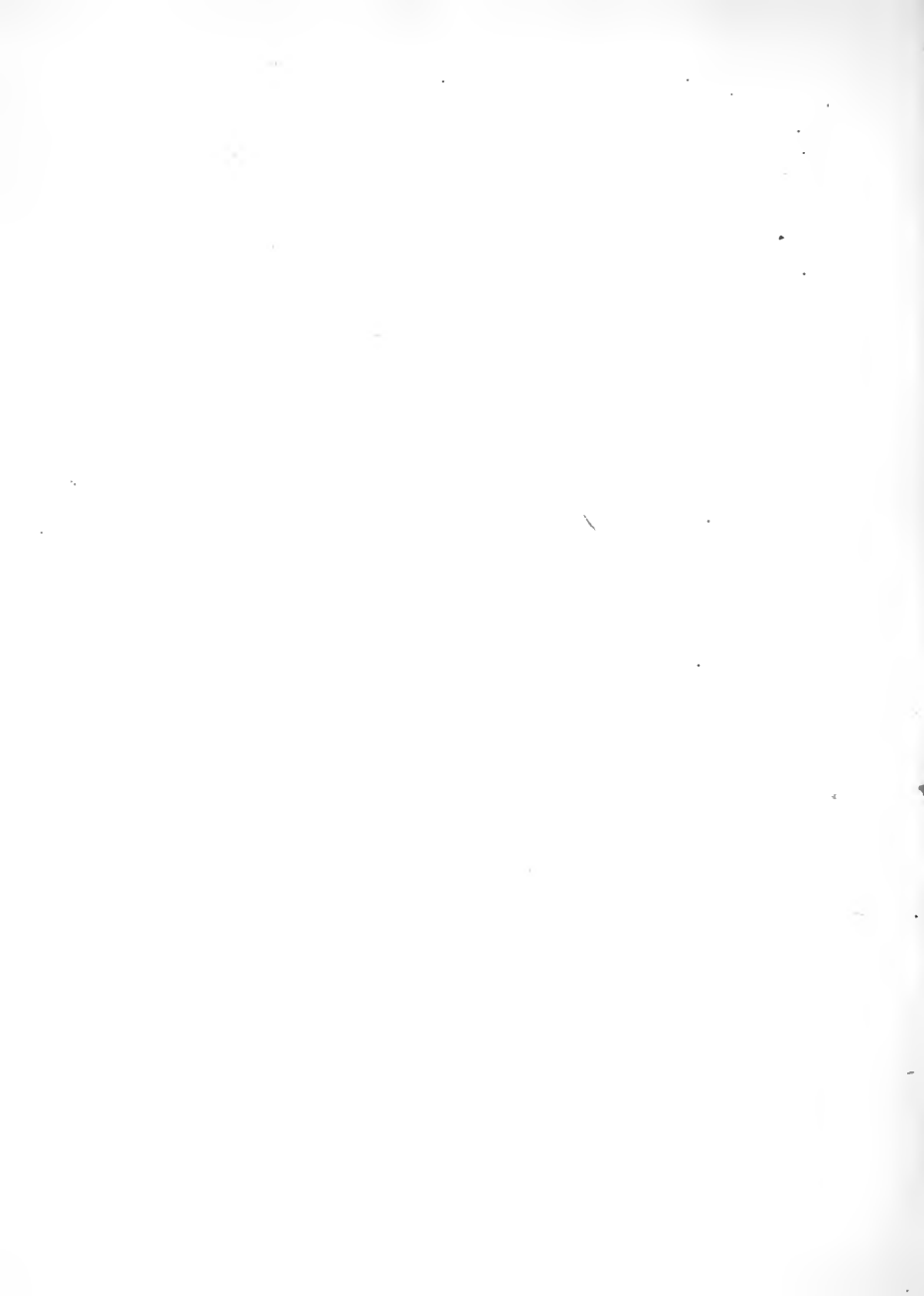


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SKETCHES AND STUDIES
IN
SOUTHERN EUROPE

BY
JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS
AUTHOR OF "STUDIES OF THE GREEK POETS" ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES
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SKETCHES AND STUDIES

IN

SOUTHERN EUROPE.

PALERMO.

THE NORMANS IN SICILY.

SICILY, in the centre of the Mediterranean, has been throughout all history the meeting-place and battle-ground of the races that contributed to civilize the West. It was here that the Greeks measured their strength against Phœnicia, and that Carthage fought her first duel with Rome. Here the bravery of Hellenes triumphed over barbarian force in the victories of Gelon and Timoleon. Here, in the harbor of Syracuse, the Athenian Empire succumbed to its own intemperate ambition. Here, in the end, Rome laid her mortmain upon Greek, Phœnician, and Sikeliot alike, turning the island into a granary and reducing its inhabitants to serfdom. When the classic age had closed, when Belisarius had vainly reconquered from the Goths for the empire of the East the fair island of Persephone and Zeus Olympius, then came the Mussulman, filling up with an interval of Oriental luxury and Arabian culture the period of utter deadness between the ancient and the modern world. To Islam succeeded the conquerors of the house of Hauteville, Norman knights who had but

lately left their Scandinavian shores, and settled in the northern provinces of France. The Normans flourished for a season, and were merged in a line of Suabian princes, old Barbarossa's progeny. German rulers thus came to sway the corn-lands of Trinacria, until the bitter hatred of the popes extinguished the house of Hohenstauffen upon the battle-field of Grandella and the scaffold of Naples. Frenchmen had the next turn—for a brief space only; since Palermo cried to the sound of her toesins, "Mora, Mora," and the tyranny of Anjou was expunged with blood. Spain, the tardy and patient power which inherited so much from the failure of more brilliant races, came at last, and tightened so firm a hold upon the island that, from the end of the thirteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century, with one brief exception, Sicily belonged to the princes of Aragon, Castile, and Bourbon. These vicissitudes have left their traces everywhere. The Greek temples of Segeste and Girgenti and Selinus, the Roman amphitheatre of Syracuse, the Byzantine mosaics and Saracenic villas of Palermo, the Norman cathedrals of Monreale and Cefalù, and the Spanish habits which still characterize the life of Sicilian cities, testify to the successive strata of races which have been deposited upon the island. Amid its anarchy of tongues, the Latin alone has triumphed. In the time of the Greek colonists Sicily was polyglot. During the Saracenic occupation it was trilingual. It is now, and during modern history it has always been, Italian. Differences of language and of nationality have gradually been fused into one substance by the spirit which emanates from Rome, and vivifies the Latin race.

The geographical position of Sicily has always influenced its history in a very marked way. The eastern coast, which is turned towards Greece and Italy, has been the centre of Arian civilization in the island, so that during Greek and Roman ascendancy Syracuse was held the capital. The western end, which projects

into the African sea, was occupied in the time of the Hellenes by Phœnicians, and afterwards by Mussulmans: consequently Panormus, the ancient seat of Punic colonists, now called Palermo, became the centre of the Moslem rule, which, inherited entire by the Norman chieftains, was transmitted eventually to Spain. Palermo, devoid of classic monuments, and unknown except as a name to the historians of Greek civilization, is therefore the modern capital of the island. "Prima sedes, corona regis, et regni caput" is the motto inscribed upon the cathedral porch and the archiepiscopal throne of Palermo: nor has any other city, except Messina,* presumed to contest this title.

Perhaps there are few spots upon the surface of the globe more beautiful than Palermo. The hills on either hand descend upon the sea with long-drawn delicately-broken outlines, so exquisitely tinted with aerial hues that at early dawn or beneath the blue light of a full moon the panorama seems to be some fabric of the fancy, that must fade away, "like shapes of clouds we form," to nothing. Within the cradle of these hills, and close upon the tideless water, lies the city. Behind and around on every side stretches the famous *Conca d'Oro*, or golden shell, a plain of marvellous fertility, so called because of its richness and also because of its shape; for it tapers to a fine point where the mountains meet, and spreads abroad, where they diverge, like a cornucopia, towards the sea. The whole of this long vega is a garden, thick with olive-groves and orange-trees, with orchards of nespole and palms and almonds, with fig-trees and locust-trees, with judas-trees that blush in spring, and with flowers as multitudinously brilliant as the fretwork of sunset clouds. It was here that in the days of

* Messina, owing to its mercantile position between the Levant, Italy, and France, and as the key to Sicily from the mainland, might probably have become the modern capital had not the Normans found a state machinery ready to their use centralized at Palermo.

the Kelbite dynasty, the sugar-cane and cotton-tree and mulberry supplied both East and West with produce for the banquet and the paper-mill and the silk-loom ; and though these industries are now neglected, vast gardens of cactuses still give a strangely Oriental character to the scenery of Palermo, while the land flows with honey-sweet wine instead of sugar. The language in which Arabian poets extolled the charms of this fair land is even now nowise extravagant : " Oh how beautiful is the lakelet of the twin palms and the island where the spacious palace stands ! The limpid water of the double springs resembles liquid pearls, and their basin is a sea : you would say that the branches of the trees stretched down to see the fishes in the pool and smile at them. The great fishes swim in those clear waters, and the birds among the gardens tune their songs. The ripe oranges of the island are like fire that burns on boughs of emerald ; the pale lemon reminds me of a lover who has passed the night in weeping for his absent darling. The two palms may be compared to lovers who have gained an inaccessible retreat against their enemies, or raise themselves erect in pride to confound the murmurs and ill thoughts of jealous men. O palms of the two lakelets of Palermo, may ceaseless, undisturbed, and plenteous dews forever keep your freshness ! " Such is the poetry which suits the environs of Palermo, where the Moorish villas of La Zisa and La Cuba and La Favara still stand, and where the modern gardens, though wilder, are scarcely less delightful than those beneath which King Roger discoursed with Edrisi, and Gian da Procida surprised his sleeping mistress.* The groves of oranges and lemons are an inexhaustible source of joy : not only because of their " golden lamps in a green night," but also because of their silvery constellations, nebulae, and drifts of stars, in the same green night, and milky ways of blossoms on the ground beneath. As in all Southern scenery,

* Boccaccio, *Giorn.* v. Nov. 6.

the transition from these perfumed thickly-clustering gardens to the bare unirrigated hill-sides is very striking. There the dwarf-palm tufts with its spiky foliage the clefts of limestone rock, and the lizards run in and out among bushes of tree-spurge and wild cactus and gray asphodels. The sea-shore is a tangle of lilac and oleander and laurustinus and myrtle and lentisk and cytissus and geranium. The flowering plants that make our shrubberies gay in spring with blossoms are here wild, running riot upon the sand-heaps of Mondello or beneath the barren slopes of Monte Pellegrino.

It was into this terrestrial paradise, cultivated through two preceding centuries by the Arabs, who of all races were wisest in the arts of irrigation and landscape-gardening, that the Norsemen entered as conquerors, and lay down to pass their lives.*

* The Saracens possessed themselves of Sicily by a gradual conquest, which began about 827 A.D. Disembarking on the little isle of Pantellaria and the headland of Lilybæum, where of old the Carthaginians used to enter Sicily, they began by overrunning the island for the first four years. In 831 they took Palermo; during the next ten years they subjugated the Val di Mazara; between 841 and 859 they possessed themselves of the Val di Noto; after this they extended their conquest over the seaport towns of the Val Demone, but neglected to reduce the whole of the northeast district. Syracuse was stormed and reduced to ruins after a desperate defence in 878; while Leo, the heir of the Greek Empire, contented himself with composing two Anacreontic elegies on the disaster at Byzantium. In 895 Sicily was wholly lost to the Greeks, by a treaty signed between the Saracens and the remaining Christian towns. The Christians during the Mussulman occupation were divided into four classes—(1) A few independent municipalities obedient loosely to the Greek Empire; (2) Tributaries who paid the Arabs what they would otherwise have sent to Byzantium; (3) Vassals, whose towns had fallen by arms or treaty into the hands of the conquerors, and who, though their property was respected and religion tolerated, were called “*dsimmi*” or “*humbled* ;” (4) Serfs, prisoners of war, sold as slaves or attached to the soil (Amari, vol. i.).

No chapter of history more resembles a romance than that which records the sudden rise and brief splendor of the house of Hauteville. In one generation the sons of Tancred passed from the condition of squires in the Norman vale of Cotentin, to kingdom in the richest island of the Southern sea. The Norse adventurers became sultans of an Oriental capital. The sea-robbers assumed, together with the sceptre, the culture of an Arabian court. The marauders whose armies burned Rome received at papal hands the mitre and dalmatic as symbols of ecclesiastical jurisdiction.* The brigands who on their first appearance in Italy had pillaged stables and farm-yards to supply their needs, lived to mate their daughters with princes and to sway the politics of Europe with gold. The freebooters, whose skill consisted in the use of sword and shield, whose brains were vigorous in strategy or state-craft, and whose pleasures were confined to the hunting-field and the wine-cup, raised villas like the Zisa and incrusted the cathedral of Monreale with mosaics. Finally, while the race was yet vigorous, after giving two heroes to the first Crusade, it transmitted its titles, its temper, and its blood to the great emperor who was destined to fight out upon the battle-field of Italy the strife of empire against papacy, and to bequeath to mediæval Europe the tradition of cosmopolitan culture. The physical energy of this brood of heroes was such as can scarcely be paralleled in history. Tancred de Hauteville begat two families by different wives. Of his children twelve were sons: two of whom stayed with their father in Normandy, while ten sought fame and found a kingdom in the south. Of these, William Iron Arm, the first Count of Apulia; Robert Guiscard, who united Calabria and Apulia under one dukedom, and carried victorious arms against both emperors of East and West; and Roger the Great Count, who added Sicily to the

* King Roger, in the mosaics of the Martorana Church at Palermo, wears the dalmatic, and receives his crown from the hands of Christ.

conquests of the Normans and bequeathed the kingdom of South Italy to his son, rose to the highest name. But all the brothers shared the great qualities of the house; and two of them, Humphrey and Drogo, also wore a coronet. Large of limb and stout of heart, persevering under difficulties, crafty yet gifted with the semblance of sincerity, combining the piety of pilgrims with the morals of highwaymen, the sturdiness of barbarians with the plasticity of culture, eloquent in the council-chamber and the field, dear to their soldiers for their bravery and to women for their beauty, equally eminent as generals and as rulers, restrained by no scruples but such as policy suggested, restless in their energy, yet neither fickle nor rash, comprehensive in their views, but indefatigable in detail, these lions among men were made to conquer in the face of overwhelming obstacles, and to hold their conquests with a grasp of iron. What they wrought, whether wisely or not for the ultimate advantage of Italy, endures to this day; while the work of so many emperors, republics, and princes has passed and shifted like the scenes in a pantomime. Through them the Greeks, the Lombards, and the Moors were extinguished in the south. The papacy was checked in its attempt to found a province of St. Peter below the Tiber. The republics of Naples, Gaeta, Amalfi, which might have rivalled, perchance, with Milan, Genoa, and Florence, were subdued to a master's hand. In short, to the Normans Italy owed that kingdom of the Two Sicilies which formed one third of her political balance, and which proved the cause of all her most serious revolutions.

Roger, the youngest of the Hauteville family, and the founder of the kingdom of Sicily, showed by his untamable spirit and sound intellect that his father's vigor remained unexhausted. Each of Tancred's sons was, physically speaking, a masterpiece, and the last was the prime work of all. This Roger, styled the Great Count, begat a second Roger, the first king of Sicily, whose

son and grandson, both named William, ruled in succession at Palermo. With them the direct line of the house of Hauteville expired. It would seem as if the energy and fertility of the stock had been drained by its efforts in the first three generations. Constance, the heiress of the family, who married Henry VI. and gave birth to the Emperor Frederick II., was daughter of King Roger, and, therefore, third in descent from Tancred. Drawing her blood more immediately from the parent stem, she thus transmitted to the princes of the race of Hohenstauffen the vigor of her Norman ancestry unweakened. This was a circumstance of no small moment in the history of Europe. Upon the fierce and daring Suabian stem were grafted the pertinacity, the cunning, the versatility of the Norman adventurers. Young Frederick, while strong and subtle enough to stand for himself against the world, was so finely tempered by the blended strains of his parentage that he received the polish of an Oriental education without effeminacy. Called upon to administer the affairs of Germany, to govern Italy, to contend with the papacy, and to settle by arms and treaties the great Oriental question of his days, Frederick, cosmopolitan from the cradle, was equal to the task. Had Europe been but ready, the Renaissance would have dated from his reign, and a universal empire, if not of political government, yet of intellectual culture, might have been firmly instituted.

Of the personal appearance of the Norman chiefs—their fair hair, clear eyes, and broad shoulders—we hear much from the chroniclers. One minutely studied portrait will serve to bring the whole race vividly before us. Bohemond, Prince of Tarentum, the son of Robert Guiscard, and first cousin to Tancred of Montferrat, was thus described by Anna Comnena, who saw him at her father's court during the first Crusade: "Neither among our own nation (the Greeks) nor among foreigners is there in our age a man equal to Bohemond. His presence dazzled the eyes,

as his reputation the fancy. He was one cubit taller than the tallest man known. In his waist he was thin, but broad in his shoulders and chest, without being either too thin or too fat. His arms were strong, his hands full and large, his feet firm and solid. He stooped a little, but through habit only, and not on account of any deformity. He was fair, but on his cheeks there was an agreeable mixture of vermilion. His hair was not loose over his shoulders, according to the fashion of the barbarians, but was cut above his ears. His eyes were blue, and full of wrath and fierceness. His nostrils were large, inasmuch as, having a wide chest and a great heart, his lungs required an unusual quantity of air to moderate the warmth of his blood. His handsome face had in itself something gentle and softening, but the height of his person and the fierceness of his looks had something wild and terrible. He was more dreadful in his smiles than others in their rage." When we read this description, remembering the romance of Bohemond's ancestry and his own life, we do not wonder at the tales of chivalry. Those "knights of Logres and of Lyonesse, Lancelot or Pelleas or Pellenore," with whose adventures our tawny-haired magnificent Plantagenets amused their leisure, become realities. The manly beauty described by the Byzantine princess in words which seem to betray a more than common interest in her handsome foe was hereditary in the house of Hauteville. They transmitted it to the last of the Suabian dynasty, to Manfred and Conradin, and to the king Enzo, whose long golden hair fell down from his shoulders to his saddle-bow as he rode, a captive, into Bologna.

The story of the Norman conquest is told by two chroniclers—William of Apulia, who received his materials from Robert Guiscard, and Godfrey Malaterra, who wrote down the oral narrative of Roger. Thus we possess what is tantamount to personal memoirs of the Norman chiefs. Nevertheless, a veil of legendary

romance obscures the first appearance of the Scandinavian warriors upon the scene of history. William of Apulia tells how, in the course of a pilgrimage to St. Michael's shrine on Monte Gargano, certain knights of Normandy were accosted by a stranger of imposing aspect, who persuaded them to draw their swords in the quarrel of the Lombard towns of South Italy against the Greeks. This man was Melo of Bari. Whether his invitation were so theatrically conveyed or not, it is probable that the Norsemen made their first acquaintance with Apulia on a pilgrimage to the Italian Michael's mount; and it is certain that Melo, whom we dimly desery as a patriot of enlarged views and indomitable constancy, provided them with arms and horses, raised troops in Salerno and Benevento to assist them, and directed them against the Greeks. This happened in 1017. Twelve years later we find the town of Aversa built and occupied by Normans under the control of their Count Rainulf; while another band, headed by Ardoin, a Lombard of Milan, lived at large upon the country, selling its services to the Byzantine Greeks. In the anarchy of Southern Italy at this epoch, when the decaying Empire of the East was relaxing its hold upon the Apulian provinces, when the papacy was beginning to lift up its head after the ignominy of Theodora and Marozia, and the Lombard power was slowly dissolving upon its ill-established foundations, the Norman adventurers pursued a policy which, however changeful, was invariably self-advantageous. On whatever side they fought, they took care that the profits of war should accrue to their own colony. Quarrel as they might among themselves, they were always found at one against a common foe. And such was their reputation in the field that the hardiest soldiers errant of all nations joined their standard. Thus it fell out that when Ardoin and his Normans had helped Maniaces to wrest the eastern districts of Sicily from the Moors, they returned, upon an insult offered by

the Greek general, to extend the right hand of fellowship to Rainulf and his Normans of Aversa. "Why should you stay here like a rat in his hole, when with our help you might rule those fertile plains, expelling the women in armor who keep guard over them?" The agreement of Ardoin and Rainulf formed the basis of the future Norman power. Their companies joined forces. Melfi was chosen as the centre of their federal government. The united Norman colony elected twelve chiefs or counts of equal authority; and henceforth they thought only of consolidating their ascendancy over the effete races which had hitherto pretended to employ their arms. The genius of their race and age, however, was unfavorable to federations. In a short time the ablest man among them, the true king, by right of personal vigor and mental cunning, showed himself. It was at this point that the house of Hauteville rose to the altitude of its romantic destiny. William Iron Arm was proclaimed Count of Apulia. Two of his brothers succeeded him in the same dignity. His half-brother, Robert Guiscard, imprisoned one Pope,* Leo IX., and wrested from another, Nicholas II., the title of Duke of Apulia and Calabria. By the help of his youngest brother, Roger, he gradually completed the conquest of Italy below the Tiber, and then addressed himself to the task of subduing Sicily. The papacy, incapable of opposing the military vigor of the Northmen, was distracted between jealousy of their growing importance and desire to utilize them for its own advantage.†

* The Normans were lucky in getting hold of popes. King Roger caught Innocent II. at San Germano in 1139, and got from him the confirmation of all his titles.

† Even the great Hildebrand wavered in his policy towards Robert Guiscard. Having raised an army by the help of the Countess Matilda in 1074, he excommunicated Robert and made war against him. Robert proved more than his match in force and craft; and Hildebrand had to confirm his title as duke, and designate him Knight of St. Peter in 1080. When Robert drove the em-

The temptation to employ these filial pirates as a cat's-paw for restoring Sicily to the bosom of the Church was too strong to be resisted. In spite of many ebbs and flows of policy, the favor which the Popes accorded to the Normans gilded the might and cunning of the adventurers with the specious splendor of acknowledged sanctity. The time might come for casting off these powerful allies and adding their conquests to the patrimony of St. Peter. Meanwhile it costs nothing to give away what does not belong to one, particularly when by doing so a title to the same is gradually formed. So the Popes reckoned. Robert and Roger went forth with banners blessed by Rome to subjugate the island of the Greek and Moor.

The honors of this conquest, paralleled for boldness only by the achievements of Cortez and Pizarro, belong to Roger. It is true that since the fall of the Kelbite dynasty Sicily had been shaken by anarchy and despotism, by the petty quarrels of princes and party leaders, and to some extent also by the invasion of Maniaces. Yet on the approach of Roger with a handful of Norman knights, "the island was guarded," to quote Gibbon's energetic phrase, "to the water's edge." For some years he had to content himself with raids and harrying excursions, making Messina, which he won from the Moors by the aid of their Christian serfs and vassals, the basis of his operations, and retiring from time to time across the Faro with booty to Reggio. The Mussulmans had never thoroughly subdued the northeastern highlands of Sicily. Satisfied peror Henry IV. from Rome, and burned the city of the Cælian, Hildebrand retired with his terrible defender to Salerno, and died there in 1085. Robert and both Rogers were good sons of the Church, deserving the titles of "Terror of the faithless," "Sword of the Lord drawn from the scabbard of Sicily," as long as they were suffered to pursue their own schemes of empire. They respected the Pope's person and his demesne of Benevento; they were largely liberal in donations to churches and abbeys. But they did not suffer their piety to interfere with their ambition.

with occupying the whole western and southern sections of the island, with planting their government firmly at Palermo, destroying Syracuse, and establishing a military post on the heights of Castro Giovanni, they had somewhat neglected the Christian population of the Val Demone. Thus the key to Sicily upon the Italian side fell into the hands of the invaders. From Messina Roger advanced by Rametta and Centorbi to Troina, a hill-town raised high above the level of the sea, within view of the solemn blue-black pyramid of *Ætna*. There he planted a garrison in 1062, two years after his first incursion into the island. The interval had been employed in marches and countermarches, descents upon the vale of Catania, and hurried expeditions as far as Girgenti, on the southern coast. One great battle is recorded beneath the walls of Castro Giovanni, when six hundred Norman knights, so say the chroniclers, engaged with fifteen thousand of the Arabian chivalry and one hundred thousand foot-soldiers. However great the exaggeration of these numbers, it is certain that the Christians fought at fearful odds that day, and that all the eloquence of Roger, who wrought on their fanaticism in his speech before the battle, was needed to raise their courage to the sticking-point. The scene of the great rout of Saracens which followed is in every respect memorable. Castro Giovanni, the old Enna of the Greeks and Romans, stands on the top of a precipitous mountain, two thousand feet above a plain which waves with corn. A sister height, Calascibetta, raised nearly to an equal altitude, keeps ward over the same valley; and from their summits the whole of Sicily is visible. Here in old days Demeter from her rock-built temple could survey vast tracts of hill and dale, breaking downward to the sea and undulating everywhere with harvest. The much-praised lake and vale of Enna* are now a desolate sulphur district, void of beauty, with

* Cicero's description of Enna is still accurate: "Enna is placed in a very lofty and exposed situation, at the top of which is a table-land and never-failing

no flowers to tempt Proserpine. Yet the landscape is eminently noble because of its breadth—bare, naked hills stretching in every direction to the sea that girdles Sicily, peak rising above peak and town-capped eyrie above eyrie—while *Ætna*, wreathed with snow, and purple with the peculiar color of its coal-black lava seen through light-irradiated air, sleeps far off beneath a crown of clouds. Upon the corn-fields in the centre of this landscape the multitudes of the infidels were smitten hip and thigh by the handful of Christian warriors. Yet the victory was by no means a decisive one. The Saracens swarmed round the Norman fortress of Troina; where, during a severe winter, Roger and his young wife, Judith of Erreux, whom he had loved in Normandy, and who journeyed to marry him amid the din of battles, had but one cloak to protect them both from the cold. The traveller who even in April has experienced the chill of a high-set Sicilian village will not be inclined to laugh at the hardships revealed by this little incident. Yet the Normans, one and all, were stanch. A victory over their assailants in the spring gave them courage to push their arms as far as the river Himera and beyond the Simeto, supply of springs. The whole site is cut off from access, and precipitous." But when he proceeds to say, "many groves and lakes surround it and luxuriant flowers through all the year," we cannot follow him. The only quality which Enna has not lost is the impregnable nature of its cliffs. A few poplars and thorns are all that remain of its forests. Did we not know that the myth of Demeter and Persephone was a poem of seed-time and harvest, we might be tempted, while sitting on the crags of Castro Giovanni and looking towards the lake, to fancy that in old days a village dependent upon Enna, and therefore called her daughter, might have occupied the site of the lake, and that this village might have been withdrawn into the earth by the volcanic action which produced the cavity. Then people would have said that Demeter had lost Persephone and sought her vainly through all the cities of Sicily; and if this happened in spring Persephone might well have been thought to have been gathering flowers at the time when Hades took her to himself. So easy and yet so dangerous is it to rationalize a legend.

while a defeat of fifty thousand Saracens by four hundred Normans at Cerami opened the way at last to Palermo. Reading of these engagements, we are led to remember how Gelon smote his Punic foes upon the Himera, and Timoleon arrayed Greeks by the ten against Carthaginians by the thousand on the Crimissus. The battle-fields are scarcely altered; the combatants are as unequally matched, and represent analogous races. It is still the combat of a few heroic Europeans against the hordes of Asia. In the battle of Cerami it is said that St. George fought visibly on horseback before the Christian band, like that wide-winged chivalrous archangel whom Spinello Aretino painted beside Sant' Efeso in the press of men upon the walls of the Pisan Campo Santo.

The capture of Palermo cost the Normans another eight years, part of which was spent according to their national tactics in plundering expeditions, part in the subjugation of Catania and other districts, part in the blockade of the capital by sea and land. After the fall of Palermo, it only remained for Roger to reduce isolated cities—Taormina, Syracuse,* Girgenti, and Castro Giovannini—to his sway. The last-named and strongest hold of the Saracens fell into his hands by the treason of Ibn-Hamūd in 1087, and thus, after thirty years' continual effort, the two brothers were at last able to divide the island between them. The lion's share, as was due, fell to Roger, who styled himself Great Count of Sicily and Calabria. In 1098, Urban II., a politician of the school of Cluny, who well understood the scope of Hildebrand's plan for subjecting Europe to the court of Rome, rewarded Roger for his zeal in the service of the Church with the title of Hereditary Apostolical Legate. The Great Count was now on a par with the most powerful monarchs of Europe. In riches he exceeded all; so that he was able to wed one daughter to the King of Hungary,

* In this siege, as in that of the Athenians, and of the Saracens 878 A.D., decisive engagements took place in the great harbor.

another to Conrad, King of Italy, a third to Raimond, Count of Provence and Toulouse, dowering them all with imperial splendor and munificence.

Hale and vigorous, his life was prolonged through a green old-age until his seventieth year. When he died, in 1101, he left two sons by his third wife, Adelaide. Roger, the younger of the two, destined to succeed his father, and (on the death of his cousin, William, Duke of Apulia, in 1127) to unite South Italy and Sicily under one crown, was only four years old at the death of the Great Count. Inheriting all the valor and intellectual qualities of his family, he rose to even higher honor than his predecessors. In 1130 he assumed the style of King of Sicily, no doubt with the political purpose of impressing his Mussulman subjects; and nine years later, when he took Innocent captive at San Germano, he forced from the half-willing pontiff a confirmation of this title as well as the investiture of Apulia, Calabria, and Capua. The extent of his sway is recorded in the line engraved upon his sword:

“*Appulus et Calaber Siculus mihi servit et Afer.*”

King Roger died in 1154, and bequeathed his kingdoms to his son William, surnamed the Bad; who in his turn left them to a William called the Good, in 1166. The second William died in 1189, transmitting his possessions by will to Constance, wife of the Snabian emperor. These two Williams, the last of the Hauteville monarchs of Sicily, were not altogether unworthy of their Norman origin. William the Bad could rouse himself from the sloth of his seraglio to head an army; William the Good, though feeble in foreign policy and no general, administered the State with clemency and wisdom.

Sicily under the Normans offered the spectacle of a singularly hybrid civilization. Christians and Northmen, adopting the habits and imbibing the culture of their Mussulman subjects, ruled a

mixed population of Greeks, Arabs, Berbers, and Italians. The language of the princes was French; that of the Christians in their territory, Greek and Latin; that of their Mohammedan subjects, Arabic. At the same time the Scandinavian Sultans of Palermo did not cease to play an active part in the affairs, both civil and ecclesiastical, of Europe. The children of the Vikings, though they spent their leisure in harems, exercised, as hereditary Legates of the Holy See, a peculiar jurisdiction in the Church of Sicily. They dispensed benefices to the clergy, and assumed the mitre and dalmatic, together with the sceptre and the crown, as symbols of their authority in Church as well as State. As a consequence of this confusion of nationalities in Sicily, we find French and English ecclesiastics* mingling at court with Moorish freedmen and Oriental odalisques, Apulian captains fraternizing with Greek corsairs, Jewish physicians in attendance on the person of the prince, and Arabian poets eloquent in his praises. The very money with which Roger subsidized his Italian allies was stamped with Cuphic letters,† and there is reason to believe that the reproach against Frederick of being a false coiner arose from his adopting the Eastern device of plating copper pieces to pass for silver. The commander of Roger's navies and his chief minister of State was styled, according to Oriental usage, Emir or Ammiraglio. George of Antioch, who swept the shores of Africa, the Morea, and the Black Sea, in his service, was a Christian of the Greek

* The English Gualterio Offamilio, or Walter of the Mill, Archbishop of Palermo during the reign of William the Good, by his intrigues brought about the match between Constance and Henry VI. Richard Palmer at the same time was Bishop of Syracuse. Stephen des Rotroux, a Frenchman of the Counts of Perche, preceded Walter of the Mill in the Arch See of Palermo.

† Frederick Barbarossa's soldiers are said to have bidden the Romans: "Take this German iron in change for Arab gold. This pay your master gives you, and this is how Franks win empire."—Amari, vol. iii. p. 468.

Church, who had previously held an office of finance under Temin, Prince of Mehdia. The workers in his silk-factories were slaves from Thebes and Corinth. The pages of his palace were Sicilian or African eunuchs. His charters ran in Arabic as well as Greek and Latin. His jewellers engraved the rough gems of the Orient with Christian mottoes in Semitic characters.* His architects were Mussulmans, who adapted their native style to the requirements of Christian ritual, and inscribed the walls of cathedrals with Catholic legends in the Cuphic language. The predominant characteristic of Palermo was Orientalism. Religious toleration was extended to the Mussulmans, so that the two creeds, Christian and Mohammedan, flourished side by side. The Saracens had their own quarters in the towns, their mosques and schools, and cadis for the administration of petty justice. French and Italian women in Palermo adopted the Oriental fashions of dress. The administration of law and government was conducted on Eastern principles. In nothing had the Mussulmans shown greater genius than in their system of internal state-craft. Count Roger found a machinery of taxation in full working order, officers acquainted with the resources of the country, books and schedules constructed on the principles of strictest accuracy, a whole bureaucracy, in fact, ready to his use. By applying this machinery he became the richest potentate in Europe, at a time when the Northern monarchs were dependent upon feudal aids and precarious revenues from crown lands. In the same way the Saracens bequeathed to the Normans the court system, which they in turn had derived from the princes of Persia and the example of

* The embroidered skull-cap of Constance of Aragon, wife of Frederick II., in the sacristy of the cathedral at Palermo, is made of gold thread thickly studded with pearls and jewels—rough sapphires and carbuncles, among which may be noticed a red carnelian engraved in Arabic with this sentence, “In Christ, God, I put my hope.”

Constantinople. Roger found it convenient to continue that organization of pages, chamberlains, ushers, secretaries, viziers, and masters of the wardrobe, invested each with some authority of State according to his rank, which confined the administration of an Eastern kingdom to the walls of the palace.* At Palermo, Europe saw the first instance of a court not wholly unlike that which Versailles afterwards became. The intrigues which endangered the throne and liberty of William the Bad, and which perplexed the policy of William the Good, were court-conspiracies of a kind common enough at Constantinople. In this court life men of letters and erudition played a first part three centuries before Petrarch taught the princes of Italy to respect the pen of a poet.

King Roger, of whom the court geographer, Edrisi, writes that "he did more sleeping than any other man waking," was surrounded during his leisure moments, beneath the palm-groves of Favara, with musicians, historians, travellers, mathematicians, poets, and astrologers of Oriental breeding. At his command Ptolemy's Optics were translated into Latin from the Arabic. The prophecies of the Erythrean Sibyl were rendered accessible in the same way. His respect for the occult sciences was proved by his dis-

* The Arabic title of *Kâid*, which originally was given to a subordinate captain of the guard, took a wide significance at the Norman court. Latinized to *gaytus*, and Græcized under the form of *καίτος*, it frequently occurs in chronicles and diplomas to denote a high minister of State. Matteo of Ajello—who exercised so powerful an influence over the policy of William the Good, heading the Mussulman and national party against the great ecclesiasties who were intriguing to draw Sicily into the entanglements of European diplomacy—was a *Kâid*. Matteo favored the cause of Tancred, Walter of the Mill espoused that of the Germans, during the war of succession which followed upon William's death. The barons of the realm had to range themselves under these two leaders—to such an extent were the affairs of State in Sicily within the grasp of courtiers and churchmen.

interring the bones of Virgil from their resting-place at Posilippo, and placing them in the Castel dell' Uovo, in order that he might have access through necromancy to the spirit of the Roman wizard. It may be remembered, in passing, that Palermo, in one of her mosques, already held suspended between earth and air the supposed relics of Aristotle. Such were the saints of modern culture in its earliest dawning. While Venice was robbing Alexandria of the body of St. Mark, Palermo and Naples placed themselves beneath the protection of a philosopher and a poet. But Roger's greatest literary work was the compilation of a treatise of universal geography. Fifteen years were devoted to the task; and the manuscript, in Arabic, drawn up by the philosopher Edrisi, appeared only six weeks before the king's death in 1154. This book, called *The Book of Roger, or the Delight of Whoso Loves to Make the Circuit of the World*, was based upon the previous labors of twelve geographers, classical and Mussulman. But aiming at greater accuracy than could be obtained by a merely literary compilation, Roger caused pilgrims, travellers, and merchants of all countries to be assembled for conference and examination before him. Their accounts were sifted and collated. Edrisi held the pen while Roger questioned. Measurements and distances were carefully compared; and a vast silver disk was constructed, on which all the seas, islands, continents, plains, rivers, mountain-ranges, cities, roads, and harbors of the known world were delineated. The text supplied an explanatory description of this map, with tables of the products, habits, races, religions, and qualities, both physical and moral, of all climates. The precious metal upon which the map was drawn proved its ruin, and the Geography remained in the libraries of Arab scholars. Yet this was one of the first great essays of practical exploration and methodical statistic, to which the genius of the Norseman and the Arab each contributed a quota. The Arabians, by their primitive

nomadic habits, by the necessities of their system of taxation, by their predilection for astrology, by their experience as pilgrims, merchants, and poets errant, were specially qualified for the labor of geographical investigation. Roger supplied the unbounded curiosity and restless energy of his Scandinavian temper, the kingly comprehensive intellect of his race, and the authority of a prince who was powerful enough to compel the service of qualified collaborators.

The architectural works of the Normans in Palermo reveal the same ascendancy of Arab culture. San Giovanni degli Eremiti, with its low white rounded domes, is nothing more or less than a little mosque adapted to the rites of Christians.* The country palaces of the Zisa and the Cuba, built by the two Williams, retain their ancient Moorish character. Standing beneath the fretted arches of the hall of the Zisa, through which a fountain flows within a margin of carved marble, and looking on the landscape from its open porch, we only need to reconstruct in fancy the green gardens and orange-groves, where fair-haired Normans whiled away their hours among black-eyed odalisques and graceful singing boys from Persia. Amid a wild tangle of orange and lemon trees overgrown with scarlet passion-flowers, the pavilion of the Cنبولا, built of hewn stone and open at each of its four sides, still stands much as it stood when William II. paced through flowers from his palace of the Cuba, to enjoy the freshness of the evening by the side of its fountain. The views from all these Saracenic villas over the fruitful valley of the Golden Horn and the turrets of Palermo and the mountains and the distant sea are ineffably delightful. When the palaces were new — when the gilding and the frescos still shone upon their honey-combed ceilings, when their mosaics glittered in noonday twilight, and their

* Tradition asserts that the tocsin of this church gave the signal in Palermo to the massacre of the Sicilian Vespers.

amber-colored masonry was set in shade of pines and palms, and the cool sound of rivulets made music in their courts and gardens, they must have well deserved their Arab titles of "Sweet Waters" and "The Glory" and "The Paradise of Earth."

But the true splendor of Palermo, that which makes this city one of the most glorious of the South, is to be sought in its churches—in the mosaics of the Cappella Palatina, founded by King Roger; in the vast aisles and cloisters of Monreale, built by King William the Good at the instance of his Chancellor Matteo;* in the Cathedral of Palermo, begun by Offamilio; and in the Martorana, dedicated by George the Admiral. These triumphs of ecclesiastical architecture, none the less splendid because they cannot be reduced to rule or assigned to any single style, were the work of Saracen builders assisted by Byzantine, Italian, and Norman craftsmen. The genius of Latin Christianity determined the basilica shape of the Cathedral of Monreale. Its bronze doors were wrought by smiths of Trani and Pisa. Its walls were incrustated with the mosaics of Constantinople. The wood-work of its roof, and the emblazoned patterns in porphyry and serpentine and glass and smalto which cover its whole surface, were designed by Oriental decorators. Norman sculptors added their dog-tooth and chevron to the mouldings of its porches; Greeks, Frenchmen, and Arabs may have tried their skill in turn upon the multitudinous ornaments of its cloister capitals. "The like of which church," said Lucius III., in 1182, "hath not been constructed by any king even from ancient times, and such an one as must compel all men to admiration." These words remain literally and emphatically true. Other cathedrals may surpass that of Monreale in sublimity, simplicity, bulk, strength, or unity of plan. None can surpass it in the strange romance with which the memory of

* Matteo of Ajello induced William to found an archbishopric at Monreale in order to spite his rival Offamilio.

its many artificers invests it. None again can exceed it in richness and glory, in the gorgeousness of a thousand decorative elements subservient to one controlling thought. "It is evident," says Fergusson in his *History of Architecture*, "that all the architectural features in the building were subordinate in the eyes of the builders to the mosaic decorations, which cover every part of the interior, and are, in fact, the glory and the pride of the edifice, and alone entitle it to rank among the finest of mediæval churches." The whole of the Christian history is depicted in this series of mosaics; but on first entering one form alone compels attention. The semi-dome of the eastern apse above the high-altar is entirely filled with a gigantic half-length figure of Christ. He raises his right hand to bless, and with his left holds an open book on which is written in Greek and Latin, "I am the light of the world." His face is solemn and severe, rather than mild or piteous; and round his nimbus runs the legend Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ. Below him, on a smaller scale, are ranged the archangels and the mother of the Lord, who holds the child upon her knees. Thus Christ appears twice upon this wall, once as the Omnipotent Wisdom, the Word by whom all things were made, and once as God deigning to assume a shape of flesh and dwell with men. The magnificent image of supreme deity seems to fill with a single influence and to dominate the whole building. The house with all its glory is his. He dwells there like Pallas in her Parthenon or Zeus in his Olympian temple. To left and right over every square inch of the cathedral blaze mosaics, which portray the story of God's dealings with the human race from the creation downward, together with those angelic beings and saints who symbolize each in his own degree some special virtue granted to mankind. The walls of the fane are therefore an open book of history, theology, and ethics for all men to read.

The superiority of mosaics over fresco as an architectural ad-

junet on this gigantic scale is apparent at a glance in Monreale. Permanency of splendor and glowing richness of tone are all on the side of the mosaics. Their true rival is painted glass. The jewelled churches of the South are constructed for the display of colored surfaces illuminated by sunlight falling on them from narrow windows, just as those of the North—Rheims, for example, or Le Mans—are built for the transmission of light through a variegated medium of transparent hues. The painted windows of a Northern cathedral find their proper counterpart in the mosaics of the South. The Gothic architect strove to obtain the greatest amount of translucent surface. The Byzantine builder directed his attention to securing just enough light for the illumination of his glistening walls. The radiance of the Northern church was similar to that of flowers or sunset clouds or jewels. The glory of the Southern temple was that of dusky gold and gorgeous needlework. The North needed acute brilliancy as a contrast to external grayness. The South found rest from the glare and glow of noonday in these sombre splendors. Thus Christianity, both of the South and of the North, decked her shrines with color. Not so the paganism of Hellas. With the Greeks, color, though used in architecture, was severely subordinated to sculpture. Toned and modified to a calculated harmony with actual nature, it did not, as in a Christian church, create a world beyond the world, a paradise of supersensual ecstacy, but remained within the limits of the known. Light falling upon carved forms of gods and heroes, bathing clear-cut columns and sharp bass-reliefs in simple lustre, was enough for the Phœbean rites of Hellas. Though we know that red and blue and green and gilding were employed to accentuate the mouldings of Greek temples, yet neither the gloomy glory of mosaics nor the gemmed fretwork of storied windows was needed to attune the souls of Hellenic worshippers to devotion.

Less vast than Monreale, but even more beautiful, because the charm of mosaic increases in proportion as the surface it covers may be compared to the interior of a casket, is the Cappella Palatina of the royal palace in Palermo. Here, again, the whole design and ornament are Arabo-Byzantine. Saracenic pendentives with Coptic legends incrust the richly painted ceiling of the nave. The roofs of the apses and the walls are coated with mosaics, in which the Bible history, from the dove that brooded over Chaos to the lives of St. Peter and St. Paul, receives a grand though formal presentation. Beneath the mosaics are ranged slabs of gray marble, edged and divided with delicate patterns of inserted glass resembling drapery with richly embroidered fringes. The floor is inlaid with circles of serpentine and porphyry encased in white marble, and surrounded by winding bands of Alexandrine work. Some of these patterns are restricted to the five tones of red, green, white, black, and pale yellow. Others add turquoise blue and emerald and scarlet and gold. Not a square inch of the surface—floor, roof, walls, or cupola—is free from exquisite gemmed work of precious marbles. A candelabrum of fanciful design, combining lions devouring men and beasts, cranes, flowers, and winged genii, stands by the pulpit. Lamps of chased silver hang from the roof. The cupola blazes with gigantic archangels, stationed in a ring beneath the supreme figure and face of Christ. Some of the Ravenna churches are more historically interesting, perhaps, than this little masterpiece of the mosaic art. But none is so rich in detail and lustrous in effect. It should be seen at night, when the lamps are lighted in a pyramid around the sepulchre of the dead Christ on Holy Thursday, when partial gleams strike athwart the tawny gold of the arches and fall upon the profile of a priest declaiming in voluble Italian to a listening crowd.

Such are a few of the monuments which still remain to show

of what sort was the mixed culture of Normans, Saracens, Italians, and Greeks at Palermo. In scenes like these the youth of Frederick II. was passed:—for at the end, while treating of Palermo, we are bound to think again of the emperor who inherited from his German father the ambition of the Hohenstauffens, and from his Norman mother the fair fields and Oriental traditions of Sicily. The strange history of Frederick—an intellect of the eighteenth century born out of date, a cosmopolitan spirit in the age of St. Louis, the crusader who conversed with Moslem sages on the threshold of the Holy Sepulchre, the Sultan of Lucera* who persecuted Paterini while he respected the superstition of Saracens, the anointed successor of Charlemagne, who carried his harem with him to the battle-fields of Lombardy and turned infidels loose upon the provinces of Christ's Vicar—would be inexplicable were it not that Palermo still reveals in all her monuments the *genius loci* which gave spiritual nurture to this phœnix among kings. From his Mussulman teachers Frederick derived the philosophy to which he gave a vogue in Europe. From his Arabian predecessors he learned the arts of internal administration and finance which he transmitted to the princes of Italy. In imitation of Oriental courts, he adopted the practice of verse composition, which gave the first impulse to Italian literature. His Grand Vizier, Piero Delle Vigne, set an example to Petrarch, not only

* Charles of Anjou gave this nickname to Manfred, who carried on the Siculo-Norman tradition. Frederick, it may here be mentioned, had transferred his Saracen subjects of the vale of Mazara to Lucera in the Capitanate. He employed them as trusty troops in his warfare with the popes and preaching friars. Nothing shows the confusion of the century in matters ecclesiastical and religious more curiously than that Frederick, who conducted a crusade and freed the Holy Sepulchre, should not only have tolerated the religion of Mussulmans, but also have armed them against the head of the Church. What we are apt to regard as religious questions really belonged at that period to the sphere of politics.

by composing the first sonnet in Italian, but also by showing to what height a low-born secretary versed in art and law might rise. In a word, the zeal for liberal studies, the luxury of life, the religious indifferentism, the bureaucratic system of State government, which mark the age of the Italian Renaissance, found their first manifestation within the bosom of the Middle Ages in Frederick. While our King John was signing Magna Charta, Frederick had already lived long enough to comprehend, at least in outline, what is meant by the spirit of modern culture.* It is true that the so-called Renaissance followed slowly and by tortuous paths upon the death of Frederick. The Church obtained a complete victory over his family and succeeded in extinguishing the civilization of Sicily. Yet the fame of the emperor who transmitted questions of sceptical philosophy to Arab sages, who conversed familiarly with men of letters, who loved splendor and understood the arts of refined living, survived both long and late in Italy. His power, his wealth, his liberality of soul and lofty aspirations, formed the theme of many a tale and poem. Dante places him in hell among the heresiarchs; and truly the splendor of his supposed infidelity found for him a goodly following. Yet Dante dated the rise of Italian literature from the blooming period of the Sicilian court. Frederick's unorthodoxy proved no drawback to his intellectual influence. More than any other man of mediæval times, he contributed, if only as the memory of a mighty name, to the progress of civilized humanity.

Let us take leave both of Frederick and of Palermo, that centre of converging influences which was his cradle, in the cathedral where he lies gathered to his fathers. This church, though its rich sunbrowned yellow† reminds one of the tone of Spanish

* It is curious to note that in this year, 1215, the date of Magna Charta, Frederick took the Cross at Aix-la-Chapelle.

† Nearly all cities have their own distinctive color. That of Venice is a

buildings, is like nothing one has seen elsewhere. Here, even more than at Monreale, the eye is struck with a fusion of styles. The western towers are grouped into something like the clustered sheafs of the Caen churches; the windows present Saracenic arches; the southern porch is covered with foliated incrustations of a late and decorative Gothic style; the exterior of the apse combines Arabic inlaid patterns of black and yellow with the Greek honeysuckle; the western door adds Norman dog-tooth and chevron to the Saracenic billet. Nowhere is any one tradition firmly followed. The whole wavers, and yet is beautiful—like the immature eclecticism of the culture which Frederick himself endeavored to establish in his Southern kingdoms. Inside there is no such harmony of blended voices: all the strange tongues which speak together on the outside, making up a music in which the far North and ancient Byzance and the delicate East sound each a note, are hushed. The frigid silence of the Palladian style reigns there—simple, indeed, and dignified, but lifeless as the century in which it flourished.

Yet there, in a side chapel near the western door, stand the porphyry sarcophagi which shrine the bones of the Hautevilles and their representatives. There sleeps King Roger—"Dux strenuus et primus Rex Siciliæ"—with his daughter Constance in her purple chest beside him. Henry VI. and Frederick II. and Constance of Aragon complete the group, which surpasses for interest all sepulchral monuments—even the tombs of the Scaligers

pearly white, suggestive of every hue in delicate abeyance, and that of Florence is a sober brown. Palermo displays a rich yellow ochre passing at the deepest into orange, and at the lightest into primrose. This is the tone of the soil, of sun-stained marble, and of the rough ashlar masonry of the chief buildings. Palermo has none of the glaring whiteness of Naples, nor yet of that parti-colored gradation of tints which adds gayety to the grandeur of Genoa.

at Verona—except only, perhaps, the statues of the nave of Innspruck. Very sombre and stately are these porphyry resting-places of princes born in the purple, assembled here from lands so distant—from the craggy heights of Hohenstauffen, from the green orchards of Cotentin, from the dry hills of Aragon. They sleep, and the centuries pass by. Rude hands break open the granite lids of their sepulchres to find tresses of yellow hair and fragments of imperial mantles embroidered with the hawks and stags the royal hunter loved. The church in which they lie changes with the change of taste in architecture and the manners of successive ages. But the huge stone arks remain unmoved, guarding their freight of mouldering dust beneath gloomy canopies of stone that temper the sunlight as it streams from the chapel windows.

SYRACUSE AND GIRGENTI.

THE traveller in Sicily is constantly reminded of classical history and literature. While tossing, it may be, at anchor in the port of Trapani, and wondering when the tedious Libeccio will release him, he must perforce remember that here Æneas instituted the games for Anchises. Here Mnestheus and Gyas and Sergestus and Cloanthus raced their galleys; on yonder little isle the Centaur struck; and that was the rock which received the dripping Menætes:

Illum et labentem Teueri et risere natantem,
Et salsos rident revomentem pectore fluctus.

Or crossing a broken bridge at night in the lumbering diligence, guarded by infantry with set bayonets, and wondering on which side of the ravine the brigands are in ambush, he suddenly calls to mind that this torrent was the ancient Halyeus, the border between Greeks and Carthaginians, established of old, and ratified by Timoleon after the battle of the Crimisus. Among the bare gray hills of Segeste his thoughts revert to that strange story told by Herodotus of Philippus, the young soldier of Crotona, whose beauty was so great that when the Segesteans found him slain among their foes they raised the corpse and burned it on a pyre of honor, and built a hero's temple over the urn that held his ashes. The first sight of Ætna makes us cry with Theocritus, *Αἴτνα μᾶτερ ἑμά . . . πολυδένδρεος Αἴτνα*. The solemn heights of Castro Giovanni bring lines of Ovid to our lips:

Haud procul Hennæis lacus est a mœnibus altæ
Nominæ Pergus aquæ. Non illo plura Caystros

Carmina cygnorum labentibus audit in undis.
Silva coronat aquas, cingens latus omne; suisque
Frondebis ut velo Phœbeos summovet ignes.
Frigora dant rami, Tyrios humus humida flores.
Perpetuum ver est.

We look, indeed, in vain for the leafy covert and the purple flowers that tempted Proserpine. The place is barren now: two solitary cypress-trees mark the road which winds downward from a desolate sulphur mine, and the lake is clearly the crater of an extinct volcano. Yet the voices of old poets are not mute. "The rich Virgilian rustic measure" recalls a long-since buried past. Even among the wavelets of the Faro, we remember Homer scanning the shore if haply somewhere yet may linger the wild fig-tree which saved Ulysses from the whirlpool of Charybdis. At any rate, we cannot but exclaim with Goethe, "Now all these coasts, gulfs, and creeks, islands and peninsulas, rocks and sandbanks, wooded hills, soft meadows, fertile fields, neat gardens, hanging grapes, cloudy mountains, constant cheerfulness of plains, cliffs, and ridges, and the surrounding sea, with such manifold variety are present in my mind; now is the *Odyssey* for the first time become to me a living world."

But, rich as the whole of Sicily may be in classical associations, two places, Syracuse and Girgenti, are pre-eminent for the power of bringing the Greek past forcibly before us. Their interest is of two very different kinds. Girgenti still displays the splendor of temples placed upon a rocky cornice between sea and olive-groves. Syracuse has nothing to show but the scene of world-important actions. Yet the great deeds recorded by Thucydides, the conflict between eastern and western Hellas which ended in the annihilation of the bright, brief, brilliant reality of Athenian empire, remain so clearly written on the hills and harbors and marsh-lands of Syracuse that no place in the world is topographi-

ically more memorable. The artist, whether architect or landscape-painter or poet, finds full enjoyment at Girgenti. The historian must be exacting, indeed, in his requirements if he is not satisfied with Syracuse.

What has become of Syracuse, "the greatest of Greek cities and the fairest of all cities" even in the days of Cicero? Scarcely one stone stands upon another of all those temples and houses. The five towns which were included by the walls have now shrunk to the little island which the first settlers named Ortygia, where the sacred fountain of Arethusa seemed to their home-loving hearts to have followed them from Hellas.* Nothing survives but a few columns of Athene's temple built into a Christian church, with here and there the marble masonry of a bath or the Roman stone-work of an amphitheatre. There are not even any mounds or deep deposits of rubble mixed with pottery to show that here once a town had been.† *Etiam periere ruinæ.* The vast city, devastated for the last time by the Saracens in 878 A.D., has been reduced to dust and swept by the sirocco into the sea. This is the explanation of its utter ruin. The stone of Syracuse is friable and easily disintegrated. The petulant moist wind of the southeast corrodes its surface, and when it falls it crumbles to powder. Here, then, the elements have had their will unchecked by such sculptured granite as in Egypt resists the mounded sand of the desert, or by such marble colonnades as in Athens have calmly borne the insults of successive sieges. What was hewn out of the solid rock—the semicircle of the theatre, the street of

* The fountain of Arethusa, recently rescued from the washerwomen of Syracuse, is shut off from the Great Harbor by a wall and planted with papyrus. Taste has not been displayed in the bear-pit architecture of its circular enclosure.

† This is not strictly true of Achradina, where some *débris* may still be found worth excavating.

the tombs with its deeply dented chariot-ruts, the gigantic quarries from which the material of the metropolis was scooped, the catacombs which burrow for miles underground—alone prove how mighty must have been the Syracuse of Dionysius. Truly, “the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity.” Standing on the beach of the Great Harbor or the Bay of Thapsus, we may repeat almost word by word Antipater’s solemn lament over Corinth :

Where is thy splendor now, thy crown of towers,
Thy beauty visible to all men’s eyes,
The gold and silver of thy treasures,
Thy temples of blest gods, thy woven bowers
Where long-stoled ladies walked in tranquil hours,
Thy multitudes like stars that crowd the skies ?
All, all are gone. Thy desolation lies
Bare to the night. The elemental powers
Resume their empire : on this lonely shore
Thy deathless Nereids, daughters of the sea,
Wailing ’mid broken stones unceasingly,
Like halcyons when the restless south winds roar,
Sing the sad story of thy woes of yore :
These plunging waves are all that’s left to thee.

Time, however, though he devours his children, cannot utterly destroy either the written record of illustrious deeds or the theatre of their enactment. Therefore, with Thucydides in hand, we may still follow the events of that Syracusan siege which decided the destinies of Greece, and, by the fall of Athens, raised Sparta, Macedonia, and finally Rome to the hegemony of the civilized world.

There are few students of Thucydides and Grote who would not be surprised by the small scale of the cliffs, and the gentle incline of Epipolæ—the rising ground above the town of Syracuse, upon the slope of which the principal operations of the Athenian

siege took place.* Maps, and to some extent also the language of Thucydides, who talks of the *προσβάσεις*, or practicable approaches to Epipolæ, and the *κρημνοῖ*, or precipices by which it was separated from the plain, would lead one to suppose that the whole region was on each hand rocky and abrupt. In reality it is extremely difficult to distinguish the rising ground of Epipolæ upon the southern side from the plain, so very gradual is the line of ascent and so comparatively even is the rocky surface of the hill. Thucydides, in narrating the night attack of Demosthenes upon the lines of Gylippus (book vii. 43-45), lays stress upon the necessity of approaching Epipolæ from the western side by Euryalus, and again asserts that during the hurried retreat of the Athenians great numbers died by leaping from the cliffs, while still more had to throw away their armor. At this time the Athenian army was encamped upon the shore of the Great Harbor, and held trenches and a wall that stretched from that side at least half way across Epipolæ. It seems therefore strange that, unless their movements were impeded by counterworks and lines of walls, of which we have no information, the troops of Demosthenes should not, at least in their retreat, have been able to pour down over the gentle descent of Epipolæ towards the Anapus, instead of returning to Euryalus. Anyhow, we can scarcely discern cliffs of more than ten feet upon the southern slope of Epipolæ, nor can we understand why the Athenians should have been forced to take these in their line of retreat. There must have been some artificial defences of which we read nothing, and of

* Epipolæ is in shape a pretty regular isosceles triangle, of which the apex is Mongibellisi or Euryalus, and the base Aehradina or the northern quarter of the ancient city. Thucydides describes it as *χωρίου ἀποκρήμνου τε καὶ ὑπὲρ τῆς πόλεως εὐθὺς κειμένου* . . . *ἐξήρτηται γὰρ τὸ ἄλλο χωρίον καὶ μέχρι τῆς πόλεως ἐπικλινές τέ ἐστι καὶ ἐπιφανές πᾶν εἶσω· καὶ ὠνόμασται ὑπὸ τῶν Συρακοσίων διὰ τὸ ἐπιπολῆς τοῦ ἄλλου εἶναι Ἐπιπολαί* (vi. 96).

which no traces now remain, but which were sufficient to prevent them from choosing their ground. Slight difficulties of this kind raise the question whether the wonderful clearness of Thucydides in detail was really the result of personal observation, or whether his graphic style enabled him to give the appearance of scrupulous accuracy. I incline to think that the author of the sixth and seventh books of the History must have visited Syracuse, and that if we could see his own map of Epipolæ, we should better be able to understand the difficulties of the backward night march of Demosthenes, by discovering that there was some imperative necessity for not descending, as seems natural, upon the open slope of the hill to the south. The position of Euryalus at the extreme point called Mongibellisi is clear enough. Here the ground, which has been continually rising from the plateau of Achradina (the northern suburb of Syracuse), comes to an abrupt finish. Between Mongibellisi and the Belvedere hill beyond there is a deep depression, and the slope to Euryalus either from the south or north is gradual. It was a gross piece of neglect on the part of Nikias not to have fortified this spot on his first investment of Epipolæ, instead of choosing Labdalum, which, wherever we may place it, must have been lower down the hill to the east. For Euryalus is the key to Epipolæ. It was here that Nikias himself ascended in the first instance, and that afterwards he permitted Gylippus to enter and raise the siege, and lastly that Demosthenes, by overpowering the insufficient Syracusan guard, got at night within the lines of the Spartan general. Thus the three most important movements of the siege were made upon Euryalus. Dionysius, when he enclosed Epipolæ with walls, recognized the value of the point, and fortified it with the castle which remains, and to which, as Colonel Leake believes, Archimedes, at the order of Hiero II., made subsequent additions. This castle is one of the most interesting Greek ruins extant. A little repair

would make it even now a substantial place of defence, according to Greek tactics. Its deep foss is cut in the solid rock, and furnished with subterranean magazines for the storage of provisions. The three piles of solid masonry on which the drawbridge rested still stand in the centre of this ditch. The oblique grand entrance to the foss descends by a flight of well-cut steps. The rock itself over which the fort was raised is honey-combed with excavated passages for infantry and cavalry, of different width and height, so that one sort can be assigned to mounted horsemen and another to foot-soldiers. The trap-doors which led from these galleries into the fortress are provided with rests for ladders, that could be let down to help a sallying force, or drawn up to impede an advancing enemy. The inner court for stabled horses and the stations for the catapults are still in tolerable preservation. Thus the whole arrangement of the stronghold can be traced, not dimly, but distinctly. Being placed on the left side of the chief gate of Epipolæ, the occupants of the fort could issue to attack a foe advancing towards that gate in the rear. At the same time the subterranean galleries enabled them to pour out upon the other side, if the enemy had forced an entrance, while the minor passages and trap-doors provided a retreat in case the garrison were overpowered in one of their offensive operations. The view from Euryalus is extensive. To the left rises Ætna, snowy, solitary, broadly vast, above the plain of Catania, the curving shore, Thapsus, and the sea. Syracuse itself, a thin white line between the harbor and the open sea, a dazzling streak between two blues, terminates the slope of Epipolæ, and on the right hand stretch the marshes of Anapus, rich with vines and hoary with olives.

By far the most interesting localities of Syracuse are the Great Harbor and the stone-quarries. When the sluggish policy and faint heart of Nikias had brought the Athenians to the verge of ruin, when Gylippus had entered the besieged city, and Plemmy-

rium had been wrested from the invaders, and Demosthenes had failed in his attack upon Epipolæ, and the blockading trenches had been finally evacuated, no hope remained for the armament of Athens except only in retreat by water. They occupied a palisaded encampment upon the shore of the harbor, between the mouth of the Anapus and the city; whence they attempted to force their way with their galleys to the open sea. Hitherto the Athenians had been supreme upon their own element; but now the Syracusans adopted tactics suited to the narrow basin in which the engagements had to take place. Building their vessels with heavy beaks, they crushed the lighter craft of the Athenians, which had no room for flank movements and rapid evolutions. A victory was thus obtained by the Syracusan navy; the harbor was blockaded with chains by the order of Gylippus; the Athenians were driven back to their palisades upon the fever-haunted shore. Their only chance seemed to depend upon a renewal of the sea-fight in the harbor. The supreme moment arrived. What remained of the Athenian fleet, in numbers still superior to that of their enemies, steered straight for the mouth of the harbor. The Syracusans advanced from the naval stations of Ortygia to meet them. The shore was thronged with spectators, Syracusans tremulous with the expectation of a decisive success, Athenians on the tenter-hooks of hope and dread. In a short time the harbor became a confused mass of clashing triremes; the water beaten into bloody surf by banks of oars; the air filled with shouts from the combatants and exclamations from the lookers-on: *ὀλοφυρμός, βοή, ρικῶντες, κρατούμενοι, ἄλλα ὅσα ἐν μεγάλῳ κινδύνῳ μέγα στρατόπεδον πολυειδῆ ἀναγκάζοιτο φθέγγεσθαι*. Then after a struggle, in which desperation gave energy to the Athenians, and ambitious hope inspired their foes with more than wonted vigor, the fleet of the Athenians was finally overwhelmed. The whole scene can be reproduced with wonderful distinctness; for the low shores

of Plemmyrium, the city of Ortygia, the marsh of Lysimeleia, the hills above the Anapus, and the distant dome of Ætna are the same as they were upon that memorable day. Nothing has disappeared except the temple of Zeus Olympius and the buildings of Temenitis.

What followed upon the night of that defeat is less easily realized. Thucydides, however, by one touch reveals the depth of despair to which the Athenians had sunk. They neglected to rescue the bodies of their dead from the Great Harbor, or to ask for a truce, according to hallowed Greek usage, in order that they might perform the funeral rites. To such an extent was the army demoralized. Meanwhile within the city the Syracusans kept high festival, honoring their patron Herakles, upon whose day it happened that the battle had been fought. Nikias neglected this opportunity of breaking up his camp and retiring unmolested into the interior of the island. When after the delay of two nights and a day he finally began to move, the Syracusans had blockaded the roads. How his own division capitulated by the blood-stained banks of the Asinarus after a six days' march of appalling misery, and how that of Demosthenes surrendered in the olive-field of Polyzelus, is too well known.

One of the favorite excursions from modern Syracuse takes the traveller in a boat over the sandy bar of the Anapus, beneath the old bridge which joined the Helorine road to the city, and up the river to its junction with the Cyane. This is the ground traversed by the army, first in their attempted flight, and then in their return as captives to Syracuse. Few, perhaps, who visit the spot, think as much of that last act in a world-historical tragedy, as of the picturesque compositions made by arundo donax, castor-oil plant, yellow flags, and papyrus, on the river-banks and promontories. Like miniature palm-groves these water-weeds stand green and golden against the bright blue sky, feathering above the boat

which slowly pushes its way through clinging reeds. The huge red oxen of Sicily in the marsh on either hand toss their spreading horns and canter off knee-deep in ooze. Then comes the fountain of Cyane, a broad round well of water, thirty feet in depth, but quite clear, so that you can see the pebbles at the bottom and fishes swimming to and fro among the weeds. Papyrus-plants edge the pool; thick and tufted, they are exactly such as one sees carved or painted upon Egyptian architecture of the Ptolemaic period.

With Thucydides still in hand, before quitting Syracuse we must follow the Athenian captives to their prison-grave. The *Latomia de' Cappuccini* is a place which it is impossible to describe in words, and of which no photographs give any notion. Sunk to the depth of a hundred feet below the level of the soil, with sides perpendicular and in many places as smooth as though the chisel had just passed over them, these vast excavations produce the impression of some huge subterranean gallery, widening here and there into spacious halls, the whole of which has been unroofed and opened to the air of heaven. It is a solemn and romantic labyrinth, where no wind blows rudely, and where orange-trees shoot upward luxuriantly to meet the light. The wild fig bursts from the living rock, mixed with lentisk-shrubs and pendent caper-plants. Old olives split the masses of fallen cliff with their tough, snake-like, slowly corded and compacted roots. Thin flames of pomegranate-flowers gleam amid foliage of lustrous green; and lemons drop unheeded from femininely fragile branches. There, too, the ivy hangs in long festoons, waving like tapestry to the breath of stealthy breezes; while under foot is a tangle of acanthus, thick curling leaves of glossiest green, surmounted by spikes of dull lilac-blossoms. Wedges and columns and sharp teeth of the native rock rear themselves here and there in the midst of the open spaces to the sky, worn fantastically into

notches and saws by the action of sirocco. A light yellow calcined by the sun to white is the prevailing color of the quarries. But in shady places the limestone takes a curious pink tone of great beauty, like the interior of some sea-shells. The reflected lights, too, and half-shadows in their scooped-out chambers, make a wonderful natural chiaroscuro. The whole scene is now more picturesque in a sublime and grandiose style than forbidding. There is even one spot planted with magenta-colored mesembrianthemums of dazzling brightness; and the air is loaded with the drowsy perfume of lemon-blossoms. Yet this is the scene of a great agony. This garden was once the Gethsemane of a nation, where nine thousand free men of the proudest city of Greece were brought by an unexampled stroke of fortune to slavery, shame, and a miserable end. Here they dwindled away, worn out by wounds, disease, thirst, hunger, heat by day and cold by night, heart-sickness, and the insufferable stench of putrefying corpses. The pupils of Socrates, the admirers of Euripides, the orators of the Pnyx, the athletes of the Lyceum, lovers and comrades and philosophers, died here like dogs; and the dames of Syracuse stood doubtless on those parapets above, and looked upon them like wild beasts. What the Gorgo of Theocritus might have said to her friend Praxinoë on the occasion would be the subject for an idyl *à la* Browning! How often, pining in those great glaring pits, which were not then curtained with ivy or canopied by olive-trees, must the Athenians have thought with vain remorse of their own Rhamnusia Nemesis, the goddess who held scales adverse to the hopes of men, and bore the legend "Be not lifted up!" How often must they have watched the dawn walk forth fire-footed upon the edge of those bare crags, or the stars slide from east to west across the narrow space of sky! How they must have envied the unfettered clouds sailing in liquid ether, or traced the far flight of hawk and swallow, sighing, "Oh that

"I too had the wings of a bird!" The weary eyes turned upward found no change or respite, save what the frost of night brought to the fire of day, and the burning sun to the pitiless cold constellations.

A great painter, combining Doré's power over space and distance with the distinctness of Flaxman's design and the coloring of Alma Tadema, might possibly realize this agony of the Athenian captives in the stone-quarries. The time of day chosen for the picture should be full noon, with its glare of light and sharply defined vertical shadows. The crannies in the straight sides of the quarry should here and there be tufted with a few dusty creepers and wild fig-trees. On the edge of the sky-line stand parties of Syracusan citizens with their wives and children (shaded by umbrellas), richly dressed, laughing and triumphing over the misery beneath. In the full foreground there are placed two figures. A young Athenian has just died of fever. His body lies stretched along the ground, the head resting on a stone, and the face turned to the sky. Beside him kneels an older warrior, sunburnt and dry with thirst, but full as yet of vigor. He stares with wide despair-smitten eyes straight out, as though he had lately been stretched upon the corpse, but had risen at the sound of movement, or some supposed word of friends close by. His bread lies untasted near him, and the half-pint of water—his day's portion—has been given to bathe the forehead of his dying friend. They have stood together through the festival of leave-taking from Peiræus, through the battles of Epipolæ, through the retreat and the slaughter at the passage of the Asinarus. But now it has come to this, and death has found the younger. Perhaps the friend beside him remembers some cool wrestling-ground in far-off Athens, or some procession up the steps of the Acropolis, where first they met. Anyhow his fixed gaze now shows that he has passed in thought at least beyond the hell around him. Not

far behind should be ranged groups of haggard men, with tattered clothes and dulled or tigerish eyes, some dignified, some broken down by grief; while here and there newly fallen corpses, and in one hideous corner a great heap of abandoned dead, should point the ghastly words of Thucydides: τῶν νεκρῶν ὁμοῦ ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι ξυννενημένων.

Every landscape has some moment of its own at which it should be seen for the first time. Mediæval cities, with their narrow streets and solemn spires, demand the twilight of a summer night. Mediterranean islands show their best in the haze of afternoon, when sea and sky and headland are bathed in aerial blue, and the mountains seem to be made of transparent amethyst. The first sight of the Alps should be taken at sunset from some point of vantage, like the terrace at Berne, or the castle walls of Salzburg. If these fortunate moments be secured, all after-knowledge of locality and detail serves to fortify and deepen the impression of picturesque harmony. The mind has then conceived a leading thought, which gives ideal unity to scattered memories and invests the crude reality with an æsthetic beauty. The lucky moment for the landscape of Girgenti is half an hour past sunset in a golden after-glow. Landing at the port named after Empedocles, having caught from the sea some glimpses of temple-fronts emergent on green hill-slopes among almond-trees, with Pindar's epithet of "splendor-loving" in my mind, I rode on such an evening up the path which leads across the Drago to Girgenti. The way winds through deep-sunk lanes of rich amber sandstone, hedged with cactus and dwarf-palm, and set with old gnarled olive-trees. As the sunlight faded, Venus shone forth in a luminous sky, and the deep yellows and purples overhead seemed to mingle with the heavy scent of orange-flowers from scarcely visible groves by the roadside. Saffron in the west and violet in the east met midway, composing a translucent atmosphere of mellow

radiance, like some liquid gem—*dolce color d'oriental berillo*. Girgenti, far off and far up, gazing seaward, and rearing her topaz-colored bastions into that gorgeous twilight, shone like the aerial vision of cities seen in dreams or imaged in the clouds. Hard and sharp against the sallow line of sunset leaned grotesque shapes of cactuses like hydras, and delicate silhouettes of young olive-trees like sylphs: the river ran silver in the hollow, and the mountain-side on which the town is piled was solid gold. Then came the dirty dull interior of Girgenti, misnamed the magnificent. But no disenchantment could destroy the memory of that vision, and Pindar's *φιλάγλαος Ἀκράγας* remains in my mind a reality.*

The temples of Girgenti are at the distance of two miles from the modern town. Placed upon the edge of an irregular plateau which breaks off abruptly into cliffs of moderate height below them, they stand in a magnificent row between the sea and plain on one side, and the city and the hills upon the other. Their color is that of dusky honey or dun amber; for they are not built of marble, but of sandstone, which at some not very distant geological period must have been a sea-bed. Oyster and scallop shells are imbedded in the roughly hewn masonry, while here and there patches of a red deposit, apparently of broken coralline, make the surface crimson. The vegetation against which the ruined colonnades are relieved consists almost wholly of almond and olive trees, the bright green foliage of the one mingling with the grays of the other, and both enhancing the warm tints of the stone. This contrast of colors is very agreeable to the eye; yet

* Lest I should seem to have overstated the splendor of this sunset view, I must remark that the bare dry landscape of the South is peculiarly fortunate in such effects. The local tint of the Girgenti rock is yellow. The vegetation on the hillside is sparse. There is nothing to prevent the colors of the sky being reflected upon the vast amber-tinted surface, which then glows with indescribable glory.

when the temples were perfect it did not exist. There is no doubt that their surface was coated with a fine stucco, wrought to smoothness, toned like marble, and painted over with the blue and red and green decorations proper to the Doric style. This fact is a practical answer to those æsthetic critics who would fain establish that the Greeks practised no deception in their arts. The whole effect of the colonnades of Selinus and Girgenti must have been an illusion, and their surface must have needed no less constant reparation than the exterior of a Gothic cathedral. The sham jewelry frequently found in Greek tombs, and the curious mixture of marble with sandstone in the sculptures from Selinus, are other instances that Greeks no less than modern artists condescended to trickery for the sake of effect. In the series of the metopes from Selinus now preserved in the museum at Palermo, the flesh of the female persons is represented by white marble, while that of the men, together with the dresses and other accessories, is wrought of common stone. Yet the bass-reliefs in which this peculiarity occurs belong to the best period of Greek sculpture, and the groups are not unworthy for spirit and design to be placed by the side of the metopes of the Parthenon. Most beautiful, for example, is the contrast between the young unarmed Hercules and the Amazon he overpowers. His naked man's foot grasps with the muscular energy of an athlete her soft and helpless woman's foot, the roughness of the sandstone and the smoothness of the marble really heightening the effect of difference.

Though ranged in a row along the same cornice, the temples of Girgenti, originally at least six in number, were not so disposed that any of their architectural lines should be exactly parallel. The Greeks disliked formality; the carefully calculated *asymmetria* in the disposition of their groups of buildings secured variety of effect as well as a broken surface for the display of light and shadow. This is very noticeable on the Acropolis of Ath-

ens, where, however regular may be the several buildings, all are placed at different angles to each other and the hill. Only two of the Girgenti temples survive in any degree of perfection—the so-called Concordia and the Juno Lacinia. The rest are but mere heaps of mighty ruins, with here and there a broken column, and in one place an angle of a pediment raised upon a group of pillars. The foundations of masonry which supported them and the drums of their gigantic columns are tufted with wild palm, aloe, asphodel, and crimson snap-dragon. Yellow-blossoming sage and mint and lavender and mignonette sprout in the crevices where snakes and lizards harbor. The grass around is gemmed with blue pimpernel and convolvulus. Gladiolus springs amid the young corn-blades beneath the almond-trees; while a beautiful little iris makes the most unpromising dry places brilliant with its delicate grays and blues. In cooler and damper hollows, around the boles of old olives and under ruined arches, flourishes the tender acanthus, and the roadsides are gaudy with a yellow daisy flower, which may perchance be the *ἐλίχρυσος* of Theocritus. Thus the whole scene is a wilderness of brightness, less radiant but more touching than when processions of men and maidens bearing urns and laurel-branches, crowned with ivy or with myrtle, paced along those sandstone roads, chanting pæans and prosodial hymns, towards the glistening porches and hypæthral cells.

The only temple about the name of which there can be no doubt, is that of Zeus Olympius. A prostrate giant who once with nineteen of his fellows helped to support the roof of this enormous fane, and who now lies in pieces among the asphodels, remains to prove that this was the building begun by the Agrigentines after the defeat of the Phœnicians at the Himera, when slaves were many and spoil was abundant, and Hellas both in Sicily and on the mainland felt a more than usual thrill of gratitude

to their ancestral deity. The greatest architectural works of the island, the temples of Segeste and Selinus as well as those of Girgenti, were begun between this period and the Carthaginian invasion of 409 B.C. The victory of the Hellenes over the barbarians in 480 B.C., symbolized in the victory of Zeus over the enslaved Titans of this temple, gave a vast impulse to their activity and wealth. After the disastrous incursion of the same foes seventy years later, the western Greek towns of the island received a check from which they never recovered. Many of their noblest buildings remained unfinished. The question which rises to the lips of all who contemplate the ruins of this gigantic temple and its compeer dedicated to Herakles is this: Who wrought the destruction of works so solid and enduring? For what purpose of spite or interest were those vast columns—in the very flutings of which a man can stand with ease—felled like forest pines? One sees the mighty pillars lying as they sank, like swaths beneath the mower's scythe. Their basements are still in line. The drums which composed them have fallen asunder, but maintain their original relation to each other on the ground. Was it earthquake or the hand of man that brought them low? Poggio Bracciolini tells us that in the fifteenth century they were burning the marble buildings of the Roman Campagna for lime. We know that the Senator Brancalcione made havoc among the classic monuments occupied as fortresses by Frangipani and Savelli and Orsini. We understand how the Farnesi should have quarried the Coliseum for their palace. But here, at the distance of three miles from Girgenti, in a comparative desert, what army, or what band of ruffians, or what palace-builders could have found it worth their while to devastate mere mountains of sculptured sandstone? The Romans invariably respected Greek temples. The early Christians used them for churches—and this accounts for the comparative perfection of the Concordia. It was in the age of the Re-

naissance that the ruin of Girgenti's noblest monuments occurred. The temple of Zeus Olympius was shattered in the fifteenth century, and in the next its fragments were used to build a break-water. The demolition of such substantial edifices is as great a wonder as their construction. We marvel at the energy which must have been employed on their overthrow no less than at the art which raised such blocks of stone and placed them in position.

While so much remains both at Syracuse and at Girgenti to recall the past, we are forced here, as at Athens, to feel how very little we really know about Greek life. We cannot bring it up before our fancy with any clearness, but rather in a sort of hazy dream, from which some luminous points emerge. The entrance of an Olympian victor through the breach in the city walls of Girgenti, the procession of citizens conducting old Timoleon in his chariot to the theatre, the conferences of the younger Dionysius with Plato in his guarded palace-fort, the stately figure of Empedocles presiding over incantations in the marshes of Selinus, the austerity of Dion and his mystic dream, the first appearance of stubborn Gylippus with long Lacedæmonian hair in the theatre of Syracuse—such picturesque pieces of history we may fairly well recapture. But what were the daily occupations of the Simætha of Theocritus? What was the state-dress of the splendid Queen Philistis, whose name may yet be read upon her seat, and whose face adorns the coins of Syracuse? How did the great altar of Zeus look, when the oxen were being slaughtered there by hundreds, in a place which must have been shambles and meat-market and temple all in one? What scene of architectural splendor met the eyes of the swimmers in the Piscina of Girgenti? How were the long hours of so many days of leisure occupied by the Greeks, who had each three pillows to his head in “splendor-loving Acragas?” Of what sort was the hospitality of Gellias? Questions like these rise up to tantalize us with the

hopelessness of ever truly recovering the life of a lost race. After all the labor of antiquary and the poet, nothing remains to be uttered but such moralizings as Sir Thomas Browne poured forth over the urns discovered at Old Walsingham: "What time the persons of these ossuaries entered the famous nations of the dead, and slept with princes and counsellors, might admit a wide solution. But who were the proprietaries of these bones, or what bodies these ashes made up, were a question above antiquarism; not to be resolved by man, nor easily perhaps by spirits except we consult the provincial guardians, or tutelary observers." Death reigns over the peoples of the past, and we must fain be satisfied to cry with Raleigh: "O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised: thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of men, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *hic jacet*." Even so. Yet while the cadence of this august rhetoric is yet in our ears, another voice is heard as of the angel seated by a void and open tomb, "Why seek ye the living among the dead?" The spirit of Hellas is indestructible, however much the material existence of the Greeks be lost beyond recovery; for the life of humanity is not many but one, not parcelled into separate moments, but continuous.

ÆTNA.

THE eruptions of *Ætna* have blackened the whole land for miles in every direction. That is the first observation forced upon one in the neighborhood of Catania or Giarre or Bronte. From whatever point of view you look at *Ætna*, it is always a regular pyramid, with long and gradually sloping sides, broken here and there by the excreescence of minor craters and dotted over with villages; the summit crowned with snow, divided into peak and cone, girdled with clouds, and capped with smoke, that shifts shape as the wind veers, dominates a blue-black monstrous mass of outpoured lava. From the top of Monte Rosso, a subordinate volcano which broke into eruption in 1669, you can trace the fountain from which "the unapproachable river of purest fire" that nearly destroyed Catania issued. You see it still bubbling up like a frozen geyser from the flank of the mountain, whence the sooty torrent spreads, or rather sprawls, with jagged edges to the sea. The plain of Catania lies at your feet, threaded by the Simeto, bounded by the promontory of Syracuse and the mountains of Castro Giovanni. This huge amorphous blot upon the landscape may be compared to an ink-stain on a variegated tablecloth, or to the coal-districts marked upon a geological atlas, or to the heathen in a missionary map—the green and red and gray colors standing for Christians and Mohammedans and Jews of different shades and qualities. The lava, where it has been cultivated, is reduced to fertile sand, in which vines and fig-trees are planted—their tender green foliage contrasting strangely with the sinister soil that makes them flourish. All the roads are black as

jet, like paths leading to coal-pits, and the country-folk on mule-back plodding along them look like Arabs on an infernal Sahara. The very lizards which haunt the rocks are swart and smutty. Yet the flora of the district is luxuriant. The gardens round Catania, nestling into cracks and ridges of the stiffened flood, are marvellously brilliant with spurge and fennel and valerian. It is impossible to form a true conception of flower-brightness till one has seen these golden and crimson tints upon their ground of ebony, or to realize the blueness of the Mediterranean except in contrast with the lava where it breaks into the sea. Copses of frail oak and ash, undergrown with ferns of every sort; cactus-hedges, orange-trees grafted with lemons and laden with both fruits; olives of scarce two centuries' growth, and fig-trees knobbed with their sweet produce, overrun the sombre soil, and spread their boughs against the deep blue sea and the translucent amethyst of the Calabrian mountains. Underfoot, a convolvulus with large white blossoms, binding dingy stone to stone, might be compared to a rope of Desdemona's pearls upon the neck of Othello.

The villages are perhaps the most curious feature of this scenery. Their houses, rarely more than one story high, are walled, paved, and often roofed with the inflexible material which once was ruinous fire, and is now the servant of the men it threatened to destroy. The churches are such as might be raised in Hades to implacable Proserpine, such as one might dream of in a vision of the world turned into hell, such as Baudelaire in his fiction of a metallic landscape might have imagined under the influence of hashcosh. Their flights of steps are built of sharply cut black lava blocks no feet can wear. Their door-jambs and columns and pediments and carved work are wrought and sculptured of the same gloomy masonry. How forbidding are the acanthus-scrolls, how grim the skulls and cross-bones on these

portals! The bell-towers, again, are ribbed and beamed with black lava. A certain amount of the structure is whitewashed, which serves to relieve the funereal solemnity of the rest. In an Indian district each of these churches would be a temple, raised in vain propitiation to the demon of the fire above and below. Some pictures made by their spires in combination with the sad village-hovels, the snowy dome of *Ætna*, and the ever-smiling sea, are quite unique in their variety of suggestion and wild beauty.

The people have a sorrow-smitten and stern aspect. Some of the men in the prime of life are grand and haughty, with the cast-bronze countenance of Roman emperors. But the old men bear rigid faces of carved basalt, gazing fixedly before them as though at some time or other in their past lives they had met Medusa: and truly *Ætna* in eruption is a Gorgon, which their ancestors have oftentimes seen shuddering, and fled from terror-frozen. The white-haired old women, plying their spindle or distaff, or meditating in grim solitude, sit with the sinister set features of Fates by their doorways. The young people are very rarely seen to smile: they open hard, black, beaded eyes upon a world in which there is little for them but endurance or the fierceness of passions that delight in blood. Strangely different are these dwellers on the sides of *Ætna* from the voluble, lithe sailors of Sciacca or Mazara, with their sunburnt skins and many-colored garments.

The Val del Bove—a vast chasm in the flank of *Ætna*, where the very heart of the volcano has been riven and its entrails bared—is the most impressive spot of all this region. The road to it leads from Zafferana (so called because of its crocus-flowers) along what looks like a series of black moraines, where the lava torrents pouring from the craters of *Ætna* have spread out, and reared themselves in stiffened ridges against opposing mountain buttresses. After toiling for about three hours over the dismal

waste, a point between the native rock of *Ætna* and the dead sea of lava is reached, which commands a prospect of the cone with its curling smoke surmounting a caldron of some four thousand feet in depth and seemingly very wide. The whole of this space is filled with billows of blackness, wave on wave, crest over crest, and dike by dike, precisely similar to a gigantic glacier, swarthy and immovable. The resemblance of the lava-flood to a glacier is extraordinarily striking. One can fancy one's self standing on the Belvedere at Macugnaga, or the Tacul point upon the Mer de Glace, in some nightmare, and finding to one's horror that the radiant snows and river-breeding ice-fields have been turned by a malignant deity to sullen, stationary cinders. It is a most hideous place, like a pit in Dante's Hell, disused for some unexplained reason, and left untenanted by fiends. The scenery of the moon, without atmosphere and without life, must be of this sort; and such, rolling round in space, may be some planet that has survived its own combustion. When the clouds, which almost always hang about the Val del Bove, are tumbling at their awful play around its precipices, veiling the sweet suggestion of distant sea and happier hills that should be visible, the horror of this view is aggravated. Breaking here and there, the billows of mist disclose forlorn tracts of jet-black desolation, wicked, unutterable, hateful in their hideousness, with patches of smutty snow above, and downward-rolling volumes of murky smoke. Shakespeare, when he imagined the damned spirits confined to "thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice," divined the nature of a glacier; but what line could he have composed adequate to shadow forth the tortures of a soul condemned to palpitate forever between the ridges of this thirsty and intolerable sea of dead fire? If the world-spirit chose to assume for itself the form and being of a dragon, of like substance to this, impenetrable, invulnerable, unapproachable, would be its hide. It requires no great stretch of

the imagination to picture these lava-lakes glowing, as they must have been when first outpoured, the bellowing of the crater, the heaving and surging of the solid earth, the air obstructed with cinders and whizzing globes of molten rock. Yet in these throes of devilish activity, the Val del Bove would be less insufferable than in its present state of suspension, asleep, but threatening, ready to regurgitate its flame, but for a moment inert.

An hour's drive from Nicolosi or Zafferana, seaward, brings one into the richest land of "olive and aloe and maize and vine" to be found upon the face of Europe. Here, too, are laughing little towns, white, prosperous, and gleeful, the very opposite of those sad stations on the mountain-flank. Every house in Aci Reale has its court-yard garden filled with orange-trees and nespole and fig-trees and oleanders. From the grinning corbels that support the balconies hang tufts of gem-bright ferns and glowing clove-pinks. Pergolas of vines, bronzed in autumn, and golden green like chrysoprase beneath an April sun, fling their tendrils over white walls and shady loggie. Gourds hang ripening in the steady blaze. Far and wide stretches a landscape rich with tilth and husbandry, boon Nature paying back to men tenfold for all their easy toil. The terrible great mountain sleeps in the distance, innocent of fire. I know not whether this land be more delightful in spring or autumn. The little flamelike flakes of brightness upon vines and fig-trees in April have their own peculiar charm. But in November the whole vast flank of *Ætna* glows with the deep-blue tone of steel; the russet woods are like a film of rust; the vine-boughs thrust living carbuncles against the sun. To this season, when the peculiar earth-tints of *Ætna*, its strong purples and tawny browns, are harmonized with the decaying wealth of forest and of orchard, I think the palm of beauty must be given in this land.

The sea is an unchangeable element of charm in all this land-

scape. Aci Castello should be visited, and those strange rocks, called the Ciclopidi, forced by volcanic pressure from beneath the waves. They are made of black basalt like the Giant's Causeway; and on their top can be traced the caps of calcareous stone they carried with them in the fret and fury of their upheaval from the sea-bed. Samphire, wild fennel, cactus, and acanthus clothe them now from crest to basement where the cliff is not too sheer. By the way, there are few plants more picturesque than the acanthus in full flower. Its pale lilac spikes of blossom stand waist-high above a wilderness of feathering, curving, delicately indented, burnished leaves—deep, glossy, cool, and green.

This is the place for a child's story of the one-eyed giant Polyphemus, who fed his flocks among the oak woods of Ætna, and who, strolling by the sea one summer evening, saw and loved the fair girl Galatea. She was afraid of him, and could not bear his shaggy-browed round rolling eye. But he forgot his sheep and goats, and sat upon the cliffs and piped to her. Meanwhile she loved the beautiful boy Acis, who ran down from the copse to play with her upon the sea-beach. They hid together from Polyphemus in a fern-curtained cavern of the shore. But Polyphemus spied them out and heard them laughing together at their games. Then he grew wroth, and stamped with his huge feet upon the earth, and made it shake and quiver. He roared and bellowed in his rage, and tore up rocks and flung them at the cavern where the children were in hiding, and his eye shot fire beneath the grisly penthouse of his wrinkled brows. They, in their sore distress, prayed to heaven; and their prayers were heard: Galatea became a mermaid, so that she might swim and sport like foam upon the crests of the blue sea; and Acis was changed into a stream that leaped from the hills to play with her amid bright waters. But Polyphemus, in punishment for his rage and spite and jealousy, was forced to live in the mid-furnaces of Ætna. There he growled

and groaned and shot forth flame in impotent fury ; for though he remembered the gladness of those playfellows, and sought to harm them by tossing red-hot rocks upon the shore, yet the light sea ever laughed, and the radiant river found its way down from the copsewood to the waves. The throes of *Ætna* in convulsion are the pangs of his great giant's heart, pent up and sick with love for the bright sea and gladsome sun ; for, as an old poet sings :

There's love when holy heaven doth wound the earth ;
And love still prompts the land to yearn for bridals :
The rain that falls in rivers from the sky,
Impregnates earth : and she brings forth for men
The flocks and herds and life of teeming Ceres.

To which let us add :

But sometimes love is barren, when broad hills,
Rent with the pangs of passion, yearn in vain,
Pouring fire tears adown their furrowed cheeks,
And heaving in the impotence of anguish.

There are few places in Europe where the poetic truth of Greek mythology is more apparent than here upon the coast between *Ætna* and the sea. Of late, philosophers have been eager to tell us that the beautiful legends of the Greeks, which contain in the colored haze of fancy all the thoughts afterwards expressed by that divine race in poetry and sculpture, are but decayed phrases, dead sentences, and words whereof the meaning was forgotten. In this theory there is a certain truth ; for mythology stands midway between the first lisps of a nation in its language and its full-developed utterances in art. Yet we have only to visit the scenes which gave birth to some Hellenic myth, and we perceive at once that, whatever philology may affirm, the legend was a living poem, a drama of life and passion transferred from human experience to the inanimate world by those early myth-makers,

who were the first and the most fertile of all artists. Persephone was the patroness of Sicily, because amid the hilly corn-fields of her mother, Demeter, and the meadow flowers she loved in girlhood are ever found sulphureous ravines and chasms breathing vapor from the pit of Hades. What were the Cyclopes—that race of one-eyed giants—but the many minor cones of *Ætna*? Observed from the sea by mariners, or vaguely spoken of by the natives, who had reason to dread their rage, these hillocks became lawless and devouring giants, each with one round burning eye. Afterwards the tales of Titans who had warred with Zeus were realized in this spot. Typhoeus or Enceladus made the mountain heave and snort; while Hephaestus not unnaturally forged thunderbolts in the central caverns of a volcano that never ceased to smoke. To the student of art and literature, mythology is chiefly interesting in its latest stages, when, the linguistic origin of special legends being utterly forgotten, the poets of the race played freely with its rich material. Who cares to be told that Achilles was the sun, when the child of Thetis and the lover of Patroclus has been sung for us by Homer? Are the human agencies of the doomed house of Thebes made less appalling by tracing back the tale of Oedipus to some *prosaic* source in old astronomy? The incest of Jocasta is the subject of supreme tragic art. It does not improve the matter, or whitewash the imagination of the Greeks, as some have fondly fancied, to unravel the fabric wrought by Homer and by Sophocles into its raw material in Arian dialects. Indeed this new method of criticism bids fair to destroy for young minds the human lessons of pathos and heroism in Greek poetry, and to create an obscure conviction that the greatest race of artists the world has ever produced were but dotards, helplessly dreaming over distorted forms of speech and obsolete phraseology.

Let us bid farewell to *Ætna* from Taormina. All along the

coast between Aci and Giardini the mountain towers distinct against a sunset sky—divested of its robe of cloud, translucent and blue as some dark sea-built crystal. The Val del Bove is shown to be a circular crater in which the lava has boiled and bubbled over to the fertile land beneath. As we reach Giardini, the young moon is shining, and the night is alive with stars so large and bright that they seem leaning down to whisper in the ears of our soul. The sea is calm, touched here and there on the fringes of the bays and headlands with silvery light; and impending crags loom black and sombre against the feeble azure of the moonlit sky. *Quale per incertam lunam et sub luce maligna*: such is our journey, with Ætna, a gray ghost, behind our path, and the reflections of stars upon the sea, and glow-worms in the hedges, and the mystical still splendor of the night, that, like Death, liberates the soul, raising it above all common things, simplifying the outlines of the earth as well as our own thoughts to one twilight hush of aerial tranquillity. It is a strange compliment to such a landscape to say that it recalls a scene from an opera. Yet so it is. What the arts of the scene-painter and the musician strive to suggest is here realized in fact; the mood of the soul created by music and by passion is natural here, spontaneous, prepared by the divine artists of earth, air, and sea.

Was there ever such another theatre as this of Taormina? Turned to the south, hollowed from the crest of a promontory one thousand feet above the sea, it faces Ætna with its crown of snow; below, the coast sweeps onward to Catania and the distant headland of Syracuse. From the back the shore of Sicily curves with delicately indented bays towards Messina; then come the straits, and the blunt mass of the Calabrian mountains terminating Italy at Spartivento. Every spot on which the eye can rest is rife with reminiscences. It was there, we say, looking northward to the straits, that Ulysses tossed between Scylla and Charybdis;

there, turning towards the flank of Ætna, that he met with Polyphemus and defied the giant from his galley. From yonder snow-capped eyrie, Αἴτνας σκοπία, the rocks were hurled on Acis. And all along that shore, after Persephone was lost, went Demeter, torch in hand, wailing for the daughter she could no more find among Sicilian villages. Then, leaving myths for history, we remember how the ships of Nikias set sail from Reggio, and coasted the forelands at our feet, past Naxos, on their way to Catania and Syracuse. Gylippus afterwards in his swift galley took the same course; and Dion, when he came to destroy his nephew's empire. Here, too, Timoleon landed, resolute in his firm will to purge the isle of tyrants.

What scenes, more spirit-shaking than any tragic shows—pageants of fire and smoke, and mountains in commotion—are witnessed from these grassy benches, when the earth rocks, and the sea is troubled, and the side of Ætna flows with flame, and night grows horrible with bellowings that forebode changes in empires!

Quoties Cyclopum effervere in agros
Vidimus undantem ruptis fornacibus Ætnam,
Flammarumque globos liquefactaque volvere saxa.

The stage of these tremendous pomps is very calm and peaceful now. Lying among acanthus-leaves and asphodels bound together by wreaths of white and pink convolvulus, we only feel that this is the loveliest landscape on which our eyes have ever rested or can rest. The whole scene is a symphony of blues—gemlike lapis-lazuli in the sea, aerial azure in the distant headlands, light-irradiated sapphire in the sky, and impalpable vapor-mantled purple upon Ætna. The gray tones of the neighboring cliffs, and the glowing brickwork of the ruined theatre, through the arches of which shine sea and hill-side, enhance by contrast these modulations of the one prevailing hue. Ætna is the domi-

nant feature of the landscape—*Αἴτνα* *μᾶτερ ἐμά* . . . *πολυδένδρεος* *Αἴτνα*—than which no other mountain is more sublimely solitary, more worthy of Pindar's praise, "The pillar of heaven, the nurse of sharp eternal snow." It is *Ætna* that gives its unique character of elevated beauty to this coast scenery, raising it to a grander and more tragic level than the landscape of the Cornice and the Bay of Naples.

ATHENS.

ATHENS, by virtue of scenery and situation, was predestined to be the mother-land of the free reason of mankind, long before the Athenians had won by their great deeds the right to name their city the ornament and the eye of Hellas. Nothing is more obvious to one who has seen many lands and tried to distinguish their essential characters than the fact that no one country exactly resembles another, but that, however similar in climate and locality, each presents a peculiar and well-marked property belonging to itself alone. The specific quality of Athenian landscape is light—not richness or sublimity or romantic loveliness or grandeur of mountain outline, but luminous beauty, serene exposure to the airs of heaven. The harmony and balance of the scenery, so varied in its details and yet so comprehensible, are sympathetic to the temperance of Greek morality, the moderation of Greek art. The radiance with which it is illuminated has all the clearness and distinction of the Attic intellect. From whatever point the plain of Athens with its semicircle of greater and lesser hills may be surveyed, it always presents a picture of dignified and lustrous beauty. The Acropolis is the centre of this landscape, splendid as a work of art with its crown of temples; and the sea, surmounted by the long low hills of the Morea, is the boundary to which the eye is irresistibly led. Mountains and islands and plain alike are made of limestone, hardening here and there into marble, broken into delicate and varied forms, and sprinkled with a vegetation of low shrubs and brushwood so sparse and slight that the naked rock in every direction meets the light. This rock

is gray and colorless: viewed in the twilight of a misty day, it shows the dull, tame uniformity of bone. Without the sun it is asleep and sorrowful. But by reason of this very deadness, the limestone of Athenian landscape is always ready to take the colors of the air and sun. In noonday it smiles with silvery lustre, fold upon fold of the indented hills and islands melting from the brightness of the sea into the untempered brilliance of the sky. At dawn and sunset the same rocks array themselves with a celestial robe of rainbow-woven hues: islands, sea, and mountains, far and near, burn with saffron, violet, and rose, with the tints of beryl and topaz, sapphire and almandine and amethyst, each in due order and at proper distances. The fabled dolphin in its death could not have shown a more brilliant succession of splendors waning into splendors through the whole chord of prismatic colors. This sensitiveness of the Attic limestone to every modification of the sky's light gives a peculiar spirituality to the landscape. The hills remain in form and outline unchanged; but the beauty breathed upon them lives or dies with the emotions of the air from whence it emanates: the spirit of light abides with them and quits them by alternations that seem to be the pulses of an ethereally communicated life. No country, therefore, could be better fitted for the home of a race gifted with exquisite sensibilities, in whom humanity should first attain the freedom of self-consciousness in art and thought. 'Αεὶ διὰ λαμπροῦτος βαίνοντες ἀβρῶς αἰθέρος—ever delicately moving through most translucent air—said Euripides of the Athenians; and truly the bright air of Attica was made to be breathed by men in whom the light of culture should begin to shine. 'Ιοστέφανος is an epithet of Aristophanes for his city; and if not crowned with other violets, Athens wears for her garland the air-empurpled hills—Hymettus, Lycabettus, Pentelicus, and Parnes.* Consequently, while still

* This interpretation of the epithet *ἰοστέφανος* is not, I think, merely fan-

the Greeks of Homer's age were Achæians, while Argos was the titular seat of Hellenic empire, and the mythic deeds of the heroes were being enacted in Thebes or Mycenæ, Athens did but bide her time, waiting to manifest herself as the true godechild of Pallas, who sprang perfect from the brain of Zeus—Pallas, who is the light of cloudless heaven emerging after storms. And Pallas, when she planted her chosen people in Attica, knew well what she was doing. To the far-seeing eyes of the goddess, although the first-fruits of song and science and philosophy might be reaped upon the shores of the Ægean and the islands, yet the days were clearly desiered when Athens should stretch forth her hand to hold the lamp of all her founder loved for Europe. As the priest of Egypt told Solon: "She chose the spot of earth in which you were born, because she saw that the happy temperament of the seasons in that land would produce the wisest of men. Wherefore the goddess who was a lover both of war and wisdom, selected and first of all settled that spot which was the most likely to produce men likest herself." This sentence from the *Timæus* of Plato* reveals the consciousness possessed by the Greeks of that intimate connection which subsists between a country and the temper of its race. To us the name Athenai—the fact that Athens by its title even in the prehistoric age was marked out as the appanage of her who was the patroness of culture—seems a fortunate accident, an undesigned coincidence of the most striking sort. To the Greeks, steeped in mythologic faith, accustomed to regard their lineage as autochthonous and their polity as the

ciful. It seems to occur naturally to those who visit Athens with the language of Greek poets in their memory. I was glad to find, on reading a paper by the Dean of Westminster on the topography of Greece, that the same thought had struck him. Ovid, too, gives the adjective *purpureus* to Hymettus.

* Jowett's translation, vol. ii. p. 520.

fabric of a god, nothing seemed more natural than that Pallas should have selected for her own exactly that portion of Hellas where the arts and sciences might flourish best. Let the Bœotians grow fat and stagnant upon their rich marsh-lands; let the Spartans form themselves into a race of soldiers in their mountain fortress; let Corinth reign, the queen of commerce, between her double seas; let the Arcadians in their oak woods worship pastoral Pan; let the plains of Elis be the meeting-place of Helenes at their sacred games; let Delphi boast the seat of sooth oracular from Phœbus. Meanwhile the sunny but barren hills of Attica, open to the magic of the sky, and beautiful by reason of their nakedness, must be the home of a people powerful by might of intelligence rather than strength of limb, wealthy not so much by natural resources as by enterprise. Here, and here only, could stand the city sung by Milton:

Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil,
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits
Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
City or suburban, studious walks and shades.

We who believe in no authentic Pallas, child of Zeus, may yet pause awhile, when we contemplate Athens, to ponder whether those old mythologic systems, which ascribed to godhead the foundation of states and the patronage of peoples, had not some glimpse of truth beyond a mere blind guess. Is not, in fact, this Athenian land the promised and predestined home of a peculiar people, in the same sense as that in which Palestine was the heritage by faith of a tribe set apart by Jehovah for his own?

Unlike Rome, Athens leaves upon the memory one simple and ineffaceable impression. There is here no conflict between Paganism and Christianity, no statues of Hellas baptized by popes

into the company of saints, no blending of the classical and mediæval and Renaissance influences in a bewilderment of vast antiquity. Rome, true to her historical vocation, embraces in her ruins all ages, all creeds, all nations. Her life has never stood still, but has submitted to many transformations, of which the traces are still visible. Athens, like the Greeks of history, is isolated in a sort of self-completion: she is a thing of the past, which still exists, because the spirit never dies, because beauty is a joy forever. What is truly remarkable about the city is just this, that while the modern town is an insignificant mushroom of the present century, the monuments of Greek art in the best period—the masterpieces of Ictinus and Mnesicles, and the theatre on which the plays of the tragedians were produced—survive in comparative perfection, and are so far unencumbered with subsequent edifices that the actual Athens of Pericles absorbs our attention. There is nothing of any consequence intermediate between us and the fourth century B.C. Seen from a distance, the Acropolis presents nearly the same appearance as it offered to Spartan guardsmen when they paced the ramparts of Deceleia. Nature around is all unaltered. Except that more villages, enclosed with olive-groves and vineyards, were sprinkled over those bare hills in classic days, no essential change in the landscape has taken place, no transformation, for example, of equal magnitude with that which converted the Campagna of Rome from a plain of cities to a poisonous solitude. All through the centuries which divide us from the age of Hadrian—centuries unfilled, as far as Athens is concerned, with memorable deeds or national activity—the Acropolis has stood uncovered to the sun. The tones of the marble of Pentelicus have daily grown more golden; decay has here and there invaded frieze and capital; war, too, has done its work, shattering the Parthenon in 1687 by the explosion of a powder-magazine, and the Propylæa in 1656 by a similar accident,

and seaming the colonnades that still remain with cannon-balls in 1827. Yet in spite of time and violence the Acropolis survives, a miracle of beauty: like an everlasting flower, through all that lapse of years it has spread its coronal of marbles to the air, unheeded. And now, more than ever, its temples seem to be incorporate with the rock they crown. The slabs of column and base-ment have grown together by long pressure or molecular adhesion into a coherent whole. Nor have weeds or creeping ivy invaded the glittering fragments that strew the sacred hill. The sun's kiss alone has caused a change from white to amber-hued or rus-set. Meanwhile, the exquisite adaptation of Greek building to Greek landscape has been enhanced rather than impaired by that "unimaginable touch of time," which has broken the regularity of outline, softened the chisel-work of the sculptor, and confounded the painter's fretwork in one tint of glowing gold. The Parthenon, the Erechtheum, and the Propylæa have become one with the hill on which they cluster, as needful to the scenery around them as the everlasting mountains, as sympathetic as the rest of nature to the successions of morning and evening, which waken them to passionate life by the magic touch of color.

Thus there is no intrusive element in Athens to distract the mind from memories of its most glorious past. Walk into the theatre of Dionysus. The sculptures that support the stage—Sileni bending beneath the weight of cornices, and lines of graceful youths and maidens—are still in their ancient station.* The pavement of the orchestra, once trodden by Athenian choruses, presents its tessellated marbles to our feet; and we may choose the seat of priest or archon or herald or thesmothetes when we

* It is true, however, that these sculptures belong to a comparatively late period, and that the theatre underwent some alterations in Roman days, so that the stage is now probably a few yards farther from the seats than in the time of Sophocles.

wish to summon before our mind's eye the pomp of the *Agamemnon* or the dances of the *Birds* and *Clouds*. Each seat still bears some carven name— $\text{IEPE}\Omega\text{Σ TΩN MOY}\Sigma\text{ΩN}$ or $\text{IEPE}\Omega\text{Σ A}\Sigma\text{KAIHIIIOY}$ —and that of the priest of Dionysus is beautifully wrought with Bacchic bass-reliefs. One of them, inscribed $\text{IEPE}\Omega\text{Σ ANTINO}\Omega\text{Y}$, proves, indeed, that the extant chairs were placed here in the age of Hadrian, who completed the vast temple of Zeus Olympius and filled its precincts with statues of his favorite, and named a new Athens after his own name.* Yet we need not doubt that their position round the orchestra is traditional, and that even in their form they do not differ from those which the priests and officers of Athens used from the time of *Æschylus* downwards. Probably a slave brought cushion and footstool to complete the comfort of these stately arm-chairs. Nothing else is wanted to render them fit now for their august occupants; and we may imagine the long-stoled, gray-bearded men throned in state, each with his wand, and with appropriate fillets on their heads. As we rest here in the light of the full moon, which simplifies all outlines and heals with tender touch the wounds of ages, it is easy enough to dream ourselves into the belief that the ghosts of dead actors may once more glide across the stage. Fiery-hearted *Medea*, statuesque *Antigone*, *Prometheus* silent beneath the hammer-strokes of *Force* and *Strength*, *Orestes* hounded by his mother's *Furies*, *Cassandra* aghast before the palace of *Mycenæ*, pure-souled *Hippolytus*, ruthless *Alcestis*, the divine youth of *Helen*, and *Clytemnestra* in her queenliness, emerge like faint gray films against the bluish background of *Hymettus*. The night air seems vocal with echoes of old Greek, more felt

* It is not a little surprising to come upon this relic of the worship of the young Bithynian at Athens in the theatre still consecrated by the memories of *Æschylus* and *Sophocles*. For his history and an account of his cult, see the article "*Antinous*" in vol. i. p. 294.

than heard, like voices wafted to our sense in sleep, the sound whereof we do not seize, though the burden lingers in our memory.

In like manner, when moonlight, falling aslant upon the Propylæa, restores the marble masonry to its original whiteness, and the shattered heaps of ruined colonnades are veiled in shadow, and every form seems larger, grander, and more perfect than by day, it is well to sit upon the lowest steps, and, looking upward, to remember what processions passed along this way bearing the sacred peplus to Athene. The Panathenaic pomp, which Pheidias and his pupils carved upon the friezes of the Parthenon, took place once in five years, on one of the last days of July.* All the citizens joined in the honor paid to their patroness. Old men bearing olive-branches, young men clothed in bronze, chapleted youths singing the praise of Pallas in prosodial hymns, maidens carrying holy vessels, aliens bending beneath the weight of urns, servants of the temple leading oxen crowned with fillets, troops of horsemen reining in impetuous steeds—all these pass before us in the frieze of Pheidias. But to our imagination must be left what he has refrained from sculpturing—the chariot formed like a ship, in which the most illustrious nobles of Athens sat, splendidly arrayed, beneath the crocus-colored curtain or peplus outspread upon a mast. Some concealed machinery caused this car to move, but whether it passed through the Propylæa and entered the Acropolis admits of doubt. It is, however, certain that the procession which ascended those steep slabs, and before whom the vast gates of the Propylæa swung open with the clangor of resounding bronze, included not only the citizens of Athens and their attendant aliens, but also troops of cavalry and chariots; for the mark of chariot-wheels can still be

* My purpose being merely picturesque, I have ignored the grave antiquarian difficulties which beset the interpretation of this frieze.

traced upon the rock. The ascent is so abrupt that this multitude moved but slowly. Splendid, indeed, beyond any pomp of modern ceremonial must have been the spectacle of the well-ordered procession advancing through those giant colonnades to the sound of flutes and solemn chants—the shrill clear voices of boys in antiphonal chorus rising above the confused murmurs of such a crowd, the chafing of horses' hoofs upon the stone, and the lowing of bewildered oxen.

To realize by fancy the many-colored radiance of the temple, and the rich dresses of the votaries illuminated by that sharp light of a Greek sun which defines outline and shadow and gives value to the faintest hue, would be impossible. All we can know for positive about the chromatic decoration of the Greeks is that whiteness artificially subdued to the tone of ivory prevailed throughout the stonework of the buildings, while blue and red and green in distinct yet interwoven patterns added richness to the fretwork and the sculpture of pediment and frieze. The sacramental robes of the worshippers accorded, doubtless, with this harmony, wherein color was subordinate to light and light was toned to softness.

Musing thus upon the staircase of the Propylæa, we may say with truth that all our modern art is but child's play to that of the Greeks. Very soul-subduing is the gloom of a cathedral like the Milanese Duomo when the incense rises in blue clouds athwart the bands of sunlight falling from the dome, and the crying of choirs upborne upon the wings of organ music fills the whole vast space with a mystery of melody. Yet such ceremonial pomps as this are as dreams and the shapes of visions when compared with the clearly defined splendors of a Greek procession through marble peristyles in open air beneath the sun and sky. That spectacle combined the harmonies of perfect human forms in movement with the divine shapes of statues, the radiance of

carefully selected vestments with hues inwrought upon pure marble. The rhythms and the melodies of the Doric mood were sympathetic to the proportions of the Doric colonnades. The grove of pillars through which the pageant passed grew from the living rock into shapes of beauty, fulfilling by the inbreathed spirit of man Nature's blind yearning after absolute completion. The sun himself—not thwarted by artificial gloom or tricked with alien colors of stained glass—was made to minister in all his strength to a pomp the pride of which was the display of form in manifold magnificence. The ritual of the Greeks was the ritual of a race at one with Nature, glorying in its affiliation to the mighty mother of all life, and striving to add by human art the coping-stone and final touch to her achievement. The ritual of the Catholic Church is the ritual of a race shut out from Nature, holding no communion with the powers of earth and air, but turning the spirit inward and aiming at the concentration of the whole soul upon an unseen God. The temple of the Greeks was the house of a present deity; its cell his chamber; its statue his reality. The Christian cathedral is the fane where God who is a spirit is worshipped; no statue fills the choir from wall to wall and lifts its forehead to the roof; but the vacant aisles, with their convergent arches soaring upward to the dome, are made to suggest the brooding of infinite and omnipresent Godhead. It was the object of the Greek artist to preserve a just proportion between the god's statue and his house, in order that the worshipper might approach him as a subject draws near to his monarch's throne. The Christian architect seeks to affect the emotions of the votary with a sense of vastness filled with the unseen power. Our cathedrals are symbols of the universe where God is everywhere pavilioned and invisible. The Greek temple was a practical, utilitarian dwelling-house, made beautiful enough to suit divinity. The modern church is an idea expressed in stone,

an aspiration of the spirit, shooting up from arch and pinnacle and spire into illimitable fields of air.

It follows from these differences between the religious aims of Pagan and Christian architecture that the former was far more favorable to the plastic arts. No beautiful or simple incident of human life was an inappropriate subject for the sculptor in adorning the houses of gods who were themselves but human on a higher level; and the ritual whereby the gods were honored was merely an exhibition, in its strength and joyfulness, of mortal beauty. Therefore the Panathenaic procession furnished Pheidias with a series of sculptural motives, which he had only to express according to the principles of his art. The frieze, three feet and four inches in height, raised forty feet above the pavement of the peristyle, ran for five hundred and twenty-four continuous feet round the outside wall of the cella of the Parthenon. The whole of this long line was wrought with carving of exquisite delicacy and supreme vigor in such low relief as its peculiar position, far above the heads of the spectators, and only illuminated by light reflected from below, required. Each figure, each attitude, and each fold of drapery in its countless groups is a study; yet the whole was a transcript from actual contemporary Athenian life. Truly, in matters of art we are but infants to the Greeks.

The topographical certainty which invests the ruins of the Acropolis with such peculiar interest belongs in a less degree to the whole of Athens. Although the most recent researches have thrown fresh doubt upon the exact site of the Pnyx, and though no traces of the agora remain, yet we may be sure that the Bema from which Pericles sustained the courage of the Athenians during the Peloponnesian war was placed upon the northern slope looking towards the Propylæa, while the wide irregular space between this hill, the Acropolis, the Areopagus, and the Theseum,

must have formed the meeting-ground for amusement and discussion of the citizens at leisure. About Areopagus, with its tribunal hollowed in the native rock, and the deep cleft beneath, where the shrine of the Eumenides was built, there is no question. The extreme insignificance of this little mound may at first, indeed, excite incredulity and wonder; but a few hours in Athens accustom the traveller to a smallness of scale which at first seemed ridiculous. Colonus, for example—the Colonus which every student of Sophocles has pictured to himself in the solitude of unshorn meadows, where groves of cypresses and olives bent unpruned above wild tangles of narcissus-flowers and crocuses, and where the nightingale sang undisturbed by city noise or labor of the husbandman—turns out to be a scarcely appreciable mound, gently swelling from the cultivated land of the Cephissus. The Cephissus, even in a rainy season, may be crossed dry-shod by an active jumper; and the Ilissus, where it flows beneath the walls of the Olympieion, is now dedicated to washerwomen instead of water-nymphs. Nature herself remains, on the whole, unaltered. Most notable are still the white poplars dedicated of old to Herakles and the spreading planes which whisper to the limes in spring. In the midst of so arid and bare a landscape, these umbrageous trees are singularly grateful to the eye and to the sense oppressed with heat and splendor. Nightingales have not ceased to crowd the gardens in such numbers as to justify the tradition of their Attic origin. Nor have the bees of Hymettus forgotten their labors: the honey of Athens can still boast a quality superior to that of Hybla or any other famous haunt of hives.

Tradition points out one spot which commands a beautiful distant view of Athens and the hills as the garden of the Academy. The place is not unworthy of Plato and his companions. Very old olives grow in abundance to remind us of those sacred trees

beneath which the boys of Aristophanes ran races, and reeds with which they might crown their foreheads are thickly scattered through the grass. Abeles interlace their murmuring branches overhead, and the planes are as leafy as that which invited Socrates and Phædrus on the morning when they talked of love. In such a place we comprehend how philosophy went hand in hand at Athens with gymnastics, and why the poplar and the plane were dedicated to athletic gods. For the wrestling-grounds were built in groves like these; and their cool peristyles, the meeting-places of young men and boys, supplied the sages not only with an eager audience, but also with the leisure and the shade that learning loves.

It was very characteristic of Greek life that speculative philosophy should not have chosen "to walk the studious cloister pale," but should rather have sought out places where "the busy hum of men" was loudest, and where youthful voices echoed. The Athenian transacted no business, and pursued but few pleasures, under a private roof. He conversed and bargained in the agora, debated on the open rocks of the Pnyx, and enjoyed discussion in the courts of the gymnasium. It is also far from difficult to understand, beneath this over-vaulted and grateful gloom of bee-laden branches, what part love played in the haunts of runners and of wrestlers, why near the statue of Hermes stood that of Eros, and wherefore Socrates surnamed his philosophy the Science of Love. *Φιλοσοφοῦμεν ἀνὲν μαλακίας* is the boast of Pericles in his description of the Athenian spirit. *Φιλοσοφία μετὰ παιδείας* is Plato's formula for the virtues of the most distinguished soul. These two mottoes, apparently so contradictory, found their point of meeting and their harmony in the gymnasium.

The mere contemplation of these luxuriant groves, set in the luminous Attic landscape, and within sight of Athens, explains a hundred passages of poets and philosophers. Turn to the open-

ing scenes of the *Lysis* and the *Charmides*. The action of the latter dialogue is laid in the palaestra of Taureas. Socrates has just returned from the camp at Potidæa, and, after answering the questions of his friends, has begun to satisfy his own curiosity:*

“When there had been enough of this, I, in my turn, began to make inquiries about matters at home—about the present state of philosophy, and about the youth. I asked whether any of them were remarkable for beauty or sense—or both. Critias, glancing at the door, invited my attention to some youths who were coming in, and talking noisily to one another, followed by a crowd. ‘Of the beauties, Socrates,’ he said, ‘I fancy that you will soon be able to form a judgment; for those who are just entering are the advanced guard of the great beauty of the day—and he is likely not to be far off himself.’

“‘Who is he?’ I said; ‘and who is his father?’

“‘Charmides,’ he replied, ‘is his name; he is my cousin, and the son of my uncle Glaucon: I rather think that you know him, although he was not grown up at the time of your departure.’

“‘Certainly I know him,’ I said; ‘for he was remarkable even then when he was still a child, and now I should imagine that he must be almost a young man.’

“‘You will see,’ he said, ‘in a moment what progress he has made, and what he is like.’ He had scarcely said the word when Charmides entered.

“Now you know, my friend, that I cannot measure anything, and of the beautiful I am simply such a measure as a white line is of chalk; for almost all young persons are alike beautiful in my eyes. But at that moment when I saw him coming in I must admit that I was quite astonished at his beauty and stature; all the world seemed to be enamoured of him; amazement and confusion reigned when he entered, and a troop of lovers followed him. That grown-up men like ourselves should have been affected in this way was not surprising, but I observed that there was the same feeling among the boys; all of them, down to the very least child, turned and looked at him as if he had been a statue.

“Chærephon called me and said: ‘What do you think of him, Socrates? Has he not a beautiful face?’

“‘That he has, indeed,’ I said.

* I quote from Professor Jowett's translation.

“‘But you would think nothing of his face,’ he replied, ‘if you could see his naked form: he is absolutely perfect.’”

This Charmides is a true Greek of the perfect type. Not only is he the most beautiful of Athenian youths, he is also temperate, modest, and subject to the laws of moral health. His very beauty is a harmony of well-developed faculties in which the mind and body are at one. How a young Greek managed to preserve this balance in the midst of the admiring crowds described by Socrates is a marvel. Modern conventions unfit our minds for realizing the conditions under which he had to live. Yet it is indisputable that Plato has strained no point in the animated picture he presents of the palæstra. Aristophanes and Xenophon bear him out in all the details of the scene. We have to imagine a totally different system of social morality from ours, with virtues and vices, temptations and triumphs, unknown to our young men. The next scene from the *Lysis* introduces us to another wrestling-ground in the neighborhood of Athens. Here Socrates meets with Hippothales, who is a devoted lover, but a bad poet. Hippothales asks the philosopher’s advice as to the best method of pleasing the boy Lysis:

“‘Will you tell me by what words or actions I may become endeared to my love?’

“‘That is not easy to determine,’ I said; ‘but if you will bring your love to me, and will let me talk with him, I may perhaps be able to show you how to converse with him, instead of singing and reciting in the fashion of which you are accused.’

“‘There will be no difficulty in bringing him,’ he replied; ‘if you will only go into the house with Ctesippus, and sit down and talk, he will come of himself; for he is fond of listening, Socrates. And as this is the festival of the Hermæa, there is no separation of young men and boys, but they are all mixed up together. He will be sure to come. But if he does not come, Ctesippus, with whom he is familiar, and whose relation Menexenus is, his great friend, shall call him.’

“‘That will be the way,’ I said. Thereupon I and Ctesippus went towards the Palæstra, and the rest followed.

“Upon entering we found that the boys had just been sacrificing; and this part of the festival was nearly come to an end. They were all in white array, and games at dice were going on among them. Most of them were in the outer court amusing themselves; but some were in a corner of the Apodyterium playing at odd-and-even with a number of dice, which they took out of little wicker baskets. There was also a circle of lookers-on, one of whom was Lysis. He was standing among the other boys and youths, having a crown upon his head, like a fair vision, and not less worthy of praise for his goodness than for his beauty. We left them, and went over to the opposite side of the room, where we found a quiet place, and sat down; and then we began to talk. This attracted Lysis, who was constantly turning round to look at us—he was evidently wanting to come to us. For a time he hesitated and had not the courage to come alone; but first of all, his friend Menexenus came in out of the court in the interval of his play, and when he saw Ctesippus and myself, came and sat by us; and then Lysis, seeing him, followed and sat down with him; and the other boys joined. I should observe that Hippothales, when he saw the crowd, got behind them, where he thought that he would be out of sight of Lysis, lest he should anger him; and there he stood and listened.”

Enough has been quoted to show that beneath the porches of a Greek palæstra, among the youths of Athens, who wrote no exercises in dead languages, and thought chiefly of attaining to perfect manhood by the harmonious exercise of mind and body in temperate leisure, divine philosophy must indeed have been charming both to teachers and to learners:

Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

There are no remains above ground of the buildings which made the Attic gymnasia splendid. Nor are there in Athens itself many statues of the noble human beings who paced their

poreches and reclined beneath their shade. The galleries of Italy and the verses of the poets can alone help us to repeople the Academy with its mixed multitude of athletes and of sages. The language of Simætha, in Theocritus, brings the younger men before us: their cheeks are yellower than helichrysus with the down of youth, and their breasts shine brighter far than the moon, as though they had but lately left the "fair toils of the wrestling-ground." Upon some of the monumental tablets exposed in the burying-ground of Cerameicus and in the Theseum may be seen portraits of Athenian citizens. A young man holding a bird, with a boy beside him who carries a lamp or strigil; a youth, naked, and scraping himself after the games; a boy taking leave with clasped hands of his mother, while a dog leaps up to fawn upon his knee; a wine-party; a soul in Charon's boat; a husband parting from his wife: such are the simple subjects of these monuments; and under each is written ΧΡΙΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ — Friend, farewell! The tombs of the women are equally plain in character: a nurse brings a baby to its mother, or a slave helps her mistress at the toilet-table. There is nothing to suggest either the gloom of the grave or the hope of heaven in any of these sculptures. Their symbolism, if it at all exist, is of the least mysterious kind. Our attention is rather fixed upon the commonest affairs of life than on the secrets of death.

As we wander through the ruins of Athens, among temples which are all but perfect, and gardens which still keep their ancient greenery, we must perforce reflect how all true knowledge of Greek life has passed away. To picture to ourselves its details, so as to become quite familiar with the way in which an Athenian thought and felt and occupied his time, is impossible. Such books as the *Charicles* of Becker or Wieland's *Agathon* only increase our sense of hopelessness, by showing that neither a scholar's learning nor a poet's fancy can pierce the mists of antiquity.

We know that it was a strange and fascinating life, passed for the most part beneath the public eye, at leisure, without the society of free women, without what we call a home, in constant exercise of body and mind, in the duties of the law courts and the assembly, in the toils of the camp and the perils of the sea, in the amusements of the wrestling-ground and the theatre, in sportful study and strenuous play. We also know that the citizens of Athens, bred up under the peculiar conditions of this artificial life, became impassioned lovers of their city;* that the greatest generals, statesmen, poets, orators, artists, historians, and philosophers that the world can boast were produced in the short space of a century and a half by a city numbering about twenty thousand burghers. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say with the author of *Hereditary Genius*, that the population of Athens, taken as a whole, was as superior to us as we are to the Australian savages. Long and earnest, therefore, should be our hesitation before we condemn as pernicious or unprofitable the instincts and the customs of such a race.

The permanence of strongly marked features in the landscape of Greece, and the small scale of the whole country, add a vivid charm to the scenery of its great events. In the harbor of Peiræus we can scarcely fail to picture to ourselves the pomp which went forth to Sicily that solemn morning when the whole host prayed together and made libations at the signal of the herald's trumpet. The nation of athletes and artists and philosophers were embarked on what seemed to some a holiday excursion, and for others bid fair to realize unbounded dreams of ambition or avarice. Only a few were heavy-hearted; but the heaviest of all was the general who had vainly dissuaded his countrymen from the endeavor, and fruitlessly refused the command thrust upon him. That was "the morning of a mighty day, a day of crisis"

* Τὴν τῆς πόλεως δύναμιν καθ' ἡμέραν ἔργῳ θεωμένους καὶ ἱραστὰς γιγνομένους αὐτῆς.—Thuc. ii. 43.

for the destinies of Athens. Of all that multitude, how few would come again; of the empire which they made so manifest in its pride of men and arms, how little but a shadow would be left, when war and fever and the quarries of Syracuse had done their fore-appointed work! Yet no commotion of the elements, no eclipse or authentic oracle from heaven, was interposed between the arrogance of Athens and sure-coming Nemesis. The sun shone, and the waves laughed, smitten by the oars of galleys racing to Ægina. Meanwhile Zeus from the watch-tower of the world held up the scales of fate, and the balance of Athens was wavering to its fall.

A few strokes of the oar carry us away from Peiræus to a scene fraught with far more thrilling memories. That little point of rock emergent from the water between Salamis and the mainland, bare, insignificant, and void of honor among islands to the natural eye, is Psyttaleia. A strange tightening at the heart assails us when we approach the centre-point of the most memorable battle-field of history. It was again "the morning of a mighty day, a day of crisis" for the destinies, not of Athens alone, but of humanity, when the Persian fleet, after rowing all night up and down the channel between Salamis and the shore, beheld the face of Phœbus flash from behind Pentelicus and flood the Acropolis of Athens with fire. The Peiræus recalls a crisis in the world's drama whereof the great actors were unconscions: fair winds and sunny waves bore light hearts to Sicily. But Psyttaleia brings before us the heroism of a handful of men, who knew that the supreme hour of ruin or of victory for their nation and themselves had come. Terrible therefore was the energy with which they prayed and joined their pæan to the trumpet-blast of dawn that blazed upon them from the Attic hills. And this time Zeus, when he heard their cry, saw the scale of Hellas mount to the stars. Let Æschylus tell the tale; for he was there. A Persian is giving an account of the defeat of Salamis to Atossa:

The whole disaster, O my queen, began
With some fell fiend or devil—I know not whence;
For thus it was: from the Athenian host
A man of Hellas came to thy son, Xerxes,
Saying that when black night shall fall in gloom,
The Hellenes would no longer stay, but leap
Each on the benches of his bark, and save
Hither and thither by stolen flight their lives.
He, when he heard thereof, discerning not
The Hellene's craft, no, nor the spite of heaven,
To all his captains gives this edict forth:
When as the sun doth cease to light the world,
And darkness holds the precincts of the sky,
They should dispose the fleet in three close ranks,
To guard the outlets and the water-ways;
Others should compass Ajax' isle around:
Seeing that if the Hellenes 'scaped grim death
By finding for their ships some privy exit,
It was ordained that all should lose their heads.
So spake he, led by a mad mind astray,
Nor knew what should be by the will of heaven.
They, like well-ordered vassals, with assent
Straightway prepared their food, and every sailor
Fitted his oar-blade to the steady rowlock.
But when the sunlight waned and night apace
Descended, every man who swayed an oar
Went to the boats with him who wielded armor.
Then through the ship's length rank cheered rank in concert,
Sailing as each was set in order due:
And all night long the tyrants of the ships
Kept the whole navy cruising to and fro.
Night passed: yet never did the host of Hellenes
At any point attempt their stolen sally;
Until at length, when day with her white steeds
Forth shining, held the whole world under sway,
First from the Hellenes with a loud clear cry
Song-like, a shout made music, and therewith

The echo of the rocky isle rang back
Shrill triumph: but the vast barbarian host
Shorn of their hope trembled; for not for flight
The Hellenes hymned their solemn pæan then—
Nay, rather as for battle with stout heart.
Then too the trumpet speaking fired our foes,
And with a sudden rush of oars in time
They smote the deep sea at that clarion cry;
And in a moment you might see them all.
The right wing in due order well arrayed
First took the lead; then came the serried squadron
Swelling against us, and from many voices
One cry arose: Ho! sons of Hellenes, up!
Now free your fatherland, now free your sons,
Your wives, the fanes of your ancestral gods,
Your fathers' tombs! Now fight you for your all.
Yea, and from our side brake an answering hum
Of Persian voices. Then, no more delay,
Ship upon ship her beak of biting brass
Struck stoutly. 'Twas a bark, I ween, of Hellas
First charged, dashing from a Tyrrhenian galleon
Her prow-gear; then ran hull on hull pell-mell.
At first the torrent of the Persian navy
Bore up: but when the multitude of ships
Were straitly jammed, and none could help another,
Huddling with brazen-mouthed beaks they clashed
And brake their serried banks of oars together;
Nor were the Hellenes slow or slack to muster
And pound them in a circle. Then ships' hulks
Floated keel upwards, and the sea was covered
With shipwreck multitudinous and with slaughter.
The shores and jutting reefs were full of corpses.
In indiscriminate rout, with straining oar,
The whole barbarian navy turned and fled.
Our foes, like men 'mid tunnies, draughts of fishes,
With splintered oars and spokes of shattered spars
Kept striking, grinding, smashing us: shrill shrieks

With groanings mingled held the hollow deep,
Till night's dark eye set limit to the slaughter.
But for our mass of miseries, could I speak
Straight on for ten days, I should never sum it :
For know this well, never in one day died
Of men so many multitudes before.

After a pause he resumes his narrative by describing *Psyttaleia* :

There lies an island before Salamis,
Small, with scant harbor, which dance-loving Pan
Is wont to tread, haunting the salt sea-beaches.
There Xerxes placed his chiefs, that when the foes
Chased from their ships should seek the sheltering isle,
They might with ease destroy the host of Hellas,
Saving their own friends from the briny straits.
Ill had he learned what was to hap ; for when
God gave the glory to the Greeks at sea,
That same day, having fenced their flesh with brass,
They leaped from out their ships ; and in a circle
Enclosed the whole girth of the isle, that so
None knew where he should turn ; but many fell
Crushed with sharp stones in conflict, and swift arrows
Flew from the quivering bowstrings winged with murder.
At last in one fierce onset with one shout
They strike, hack, hew the wretches' limbs asunder,
Till every man alive had fallen beneath them.
Then Xerxes groaned, seeing the gulf unclosed
Of grief below him ; for his throne was raised
High in the sight of all by the sea-shore.
Rending his robes, and shrieking a shrill shriek,
He hurriedly gave orders to his host ;
Then headlong rushed in rout and heedless ruin.

Atossa makes appropriate exclamations of despair and horror.
Then the messenger proceeds :

The captains of the ships that were not shattered,
Set speedy sail in flight as the winds blew.

The remnant of the host died miserably.
Some in Bæotia round the glimmering springs
Tired out with thirst ; some of us scant of breath
Escaped with bare life to the Phocian bounds,
And land of Doris, and the Melian Gulf,
Where with kind draughts Spercheius soaks the soil.
Thence in our flight Achaia's ancient plain
And Thessaly's stronghold received us worn
For want of food. Most died in that fell place
Of thirst and famine ; for both deaths were there.
Yet to Magnesia came we and the coast
Of Macedonia, to the ford of Axios,
And Bolbe's canebrakes and the Pangæan range,
Edonian borders. Then in that grim night
God sent unseasonable frost, and froze
The stream of holy Strymon. He who erst
Recked naught of gods, now prayed with supplication,
Bowling before the powers of earth and sky.
But when the host from lengthy orisons
Surceased, it crossed the ice-incrusted ford.
And he among us who set forth before
The sun-god's rays were scattered, now was saved.
For blazing with sharp beams the sun's bright circle
Pierced the mid-stream, dissolving it with fire.
There were they buddled. Happy then was he
Who soonest cut the breath of life asunder.
Such as survived and had the luck of living,
Crossed Thrace with pain and peril manifold,
'Scaping mischance, a miserable remnant,
Into the dear land of their homes. Wherefore
Persia may wail, wanting in vain her darlings.
This is the truth. Much I omit to tell
Of woes by God wrought on the Persian race.

Upon this triumphal note it were well, perhaps, to pause. Yet since the sojourner in Athens must needs depart by sea, let us advance a little way farther beyond Salamis. The low shore of

the isthmus soon appears; and there is the hill of Corinth and the site of the city, as desolate now as when Antipater of Sidon made the sea-waves utter a threnos over her ruins. "The deathless Nereids, daughters of Oceanus," still lament by the shore, and the Isthmian pines are as green as when their boughs were plucked to bind a victor's forehead. Feathering the gray rock now as then, they bear witness to the wisdom and the moderation of the Greeks, who gave to the conquerors in sacred games no wreath of gold, or title of nobility, or land, or jewels, but the honor of an illustrious name, the guerdon of a mighty deed, and branches taken from the wild pine of Corinth, or the olive of Olympia, or the bay that flourished like a weed at Delphi. What was indigenous and characteristic of his native soil, not rare and costly things from foreign lands, was precious to the Greek. This piety, after the lapse of centuries and the passing away of mighty cities, still bears fruit. Oblivion cannot wholly efface the memory of those great games while the fir-trees rustle to the sea-wind as of old. Down the gulf we pass, between mountain-range and mountain. On one hand, two-peaked Parnassus rears his cope of snow aloft over Delphi; on the other, Erymanthus and Hermes' home, Cyllene, bar the pastoral glades of Arcady. Greece is the land of mountains, not of rivers or of plains. The titles of the hills of Hellas smite our ears with echoes of ancient music—Olympus and Cithæron, Taygetus, Othrys, Helicon, and Ida. The headlands of the mainland are mountains, and the islands are mountain summits of a submerged continent. Austerely beautiful, not wild with an Italian luxuriance, nor mournful with Sicilian monotony of outline, nor yet again overwhelming with the sublimity of Alps, they seem the proper home of a race which sought its ideal of beauty in distinction of shape and not in multiplicity of detail, in light and not in richness of coloring, in form and not in size.

At length the open sea is reached. Past Zante and Cephalonia we glide "under a roof of blue Ionian weather;" or, if the sky has been troubled with storm, we watch the moulding of long glittering cloud-lines, processions and pomps of silvery vapor, fretwork and frieze of alabaster piled above the islands, pearly promontories and domes of rounded snow. Soon Santa Maura comes in sight :

Leucatæ nimbosa cacumina montis,
Et formidatus nautis aperitur Apollo.

Here Sappho leaped into the waves to cure love-longing, according to the ancient story ; and he who sees the white cliffs chafed with breakers and burning with fierce light, as it was once my luck to see them, may well, with Childe Harold, "feel or deem he feels no common glow." All through the afternoon it had been raining, and the sea was running high beneath a petulant west wind. But just before evening, while yet there remained a hand's-breadth between the sea and the sinking sun, the clouds were rent and blown in masses about the sky. Rain still fell fretfully in scuds and fleeces ; but where for hours there had been nothing but a monotone of grayness, suddenly fire broke and radiance and storm-clouds in commotion. Then, as if built up by music, a rainbow rose and grew above Leucadia, planting one foot on Actium and the other on Ithaca, and spanning with a horseshoe arch that touched the zenith the long line of roseate cliffs. The clouds upon which this bow was woven were steel-blue beneath and crimson above ; and the bow itself was bathed in fire—its violets and greens and yellows visibly ignited by the liquid flame on which it rested. The sea beneath, stormily dancing, flashed back from all its crest the same red glow, shining like a ridged lava-torrent in its first combustion. Then, as the sun sank, the crags burned deeper with scarlet blushes as of blood, and with passionate bloom

as of pomegranate or oleander flowers. Could Turner rise from the grave to paint a picture that should bear the name of "Sappho's Leap," he might strive to paint it thus; and the world would complain that he had dreamed the poetry of his picture. But who could *dream* anything so wild and yet so definite? Only the passion of orchestras, the fire-flight of the last movement of the C minor symphony, can in the realms of art give utterance to the spirit of scenes like this.

RIMINI.

SIGISMONDO PANDOLFO MALATESTA AND LEO BATTISTA ALBERTI.

RIMINI is a city of about eighteen thousand souls, famous for its Stabilimento de' Bagni and its antiquities, seated upon the coast of the Adriatic, a little to the southeast of the world-historical Rubicon. It is our duty to mention the baths first among its claims to distinction, since the prosperity and cheerfulness of the little town depend on them in a great measure. But visitors from the North will fly from these, to marvel at the bridge which Augustus built and Tiberius completed, and which still spans the Marecchia with five gigantic arches of white Istrian limestone, as solidly as if it had not borne the trappings of at least three conquests. The triumphal arch, too, erected in honor of Augustus, is a notable monument of Roman architecture. Broad, ponderous, substantial, tufted here and there with flowering weeds, and surmounted with mediæval machicolations, proving it to have sometimes stood for city gate or fortress, it contrasts most favorably with the slight and somewhat gimerack arch of Trajan in the sister city of Ancona. Yet these remains of the imperial pontifices, mighty and interesting as they are, sink into comparative insignificance beside the one great wonder of Rimini, the cathedral remodelled for Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta by Leo Battista Alberti in 1450. This strange church, one of the earliest extant buildings in which the Neopaganism of the Renaissance showed itself in full force, brings together before our memory two men who might be chosen as typical, in their contrasted characters, of the transitional age which gave them birth.

No one with any tincture of literary knowledge is ignorant of the fame, at least, of the great Malatesta family—the house of the Wrongheads, as they were rightly called by some prevision of their future part in Lombard history. The readers of the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth cantos of the *Inferno* have all heard of

E il mastin vecchio e il nuovo da Verucchio
Che fecer di Montagna il mal governo,

while the story of Francesca da Polenta, who was wedded to the hunchback Giovanni Malatesta and murdered by him with her lover, Paolo, is known not merely to students of Dante, but to readers of Byron and Leigh Hunt, to admirers of Flaxman, Ary Scheffer, Doré—to all, in fact, who have of art and letters any love.

The history of these Malatesti, from their first establishment under Otho III. as lieutenants for the empire in the Marches of Ancona, down to their final subjugation by the papacy in the age of the Renaissance, is made up of all the vicissitudes which could befall a mediæval Italian despotism. Acquiring an unlawful right over the towns of Rimini, Cesena, Sogliano, Ghiacciuolo, they ruled their petty principalities like tyrants by the help of the Gnef and Ghibelline factions, inclining to the one or the other as it suited their humor or their interest, wrangling among themselves, transmitting the succession of their dynasty through bastards and by deeds of force, quarrelling with their neighbors the Counts of Urbino, alternately defying and submitting to the papal legates in Romagna, serving as condottieri in the wars of the Visconti and the state of Venice, and by their restlessness and genius for military intrigues contributing in no slight measure to the general disturbance of Italy. The Malatesti were a race of strongly marked character: more, perhaps, than any other house of Italian tyrants, they combined for generations those qualities of the

fox and the lion which Machiavelli thought indispensable to a successful despot. Son after son, brother with brother, they continued to be fierce and valiant soldiers, cruel in peace, hardy in war, but treasonable and suspicious in all transactions that could not be settled by the sword. Want of union, with them as with the Baglioni and many other of the minor noble families in Italy, prevented their founding a substantial dynasty. Their power, based on force, was maintained by craft and crime, and transmitted through tortuous channels by intrigue. While false in their dealings with the world at large, they were diabolical in the perfidy with which they treated one another. No feudal custom, no standard of hereditary right, ruled the succession in their family. Therefore the ablest Malatesta for the moment clutched what he could of the domains that owned his house for masters. Partitions among sons or brothers, mutually hostile and suspicious, weakened the whole stock. Yet they were great enough to hold their own for centuries among the many tyrants who infested Lombardy. That the other princely families of Romagna, Emilia, and the March were in the same state of internal discord and dismemberment was probably one reason why the Malatesti stood their ground so firmly as they did.

So far as Rimini is concerned, the house of Malatesta culminated in Sigismondo Pandolfo, son of Gian Galeazzo Visconti's general, the perfidious Pandolfo. It was he who built the Rocca, or castle of the despots, which stands a little way outside the town, commanding a fair view of Apennine tossed hill-tops and broad Lombard plain, and who remodelled the Cathedral of St. Francis on a plan suggested by the greatest genius of the age. Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta was one of the strangest products of the earlier Renaissance. To enumerate the crimes which he committed within the sphere of his own family, mysterious and inhuman outrages which render the tale of the Cenci credible,

would violate the decencies of literature. A thoroughly bestial nature gains thus much with posterity, that its worst qualities must be passed by in silence. It is enough to mention that he murdered three wives in succession,* Bussoni di Carmagnuola, Guinipera d' Este, and Polissena Sforza, on various pretexts of infidelity, and carved horns upon his own tomb with this fantastic legend underneath :

Porto le corna ch' ognuno le vede,
E tal le porta che non se lo crede.

He died in wedlock with the beautiful and learned Isotta degli Atti, who had for some time been his mistress. But, like most of the Malatesti, he left no legitimate offspring. Throughout his life he was distinguished for bravery and cunning, for endurance of fatigue and rapidity of action, for an almost fretful rashness in the execution of his schemes, and for a character terrible in its violence. He was acknowledged as a great general ; yet nothing succeeded with him. The long warfare which he carried on against the Duke of Montefeltro ended in his discomfiture. Having begun by defying the Holy See, he was impeached at Rome for heresy, parricide, incest, adultery, rape, and sacrilege, burned in effigy by Pope Pius II., and finally restored to the bosom of the Church, after suffering the despoliation of almost all his territories, in 1463. The occasion on which this fierce and turbulent despiser of laws human and divine was forced to kneel as a penitent before the papal legate in the gorgeous temple dedicated to

* His first wife was a daughter of the great general of the Venetians against Francesco Sforza. Whether Sigismondo murdered her, as Sansovino seems to imply in his *Famiglie Illustri*, or whether he only repudiated her after her father's execution on the Piazza di San Marco, admits of doubt. About the question of Sigismondo's marriage with Isotta there is also some uncertainty. At any rate, she had been some time his mistress before she became his wife.

his own pride, in order that the ban of excommunication might be removed from Rimini, was one of those petty triumphs, interesting chiefly for their picturesqueness, by which the popes confirmed their questionable rights over the cities of Romagna. Sigismondo, shorn of his sovereignty, took the command of the Venetian troops against the Turks in the Morea, and returned in 1465, crowned with laurels, to die at Rimini in the scene of his old splendor.

A very characteristic incident belongs to this last act of his life. Dissolute, treacherous, and inhuman as he was, the tyrant of Rimini had always encouraged literature, and delighted in the society of artists. He who could brook no contradiction from a prince or soldier, allowed the pedantic scholars of the sixteenth century to dictate to him in matters of taste, and sat with exemplary humility at the feet of Latinists like Porcellio, Basinio, and Trebanio. Valturio, the engineer, and Alberti, the architect, were his familiar friends; and the best hours of his life were spent in conversation with these men. Now that he found himself upon the sacred soil of Greece, he was determined not to return to Italy empty-handed. Should he bring manuscripts or marbles, precious vases or inscriptions in half-legible Greek character? These relics were greedily sought for by the potentates of Italian cities; and no doubt Sigismondo enriched his library with some such treasures. But he obtained a nobler prize—nothing less than the body of a saint of scholarship, the authentic bones of the great Platonist, Gemisthus Pletho.* These he exhumed from their Greek grave and caused them to be deposited in a stone sarcophagus outside the cathedral of his building in Rimini. The Venetians, when they stole the body of St. Mark from Alexandria, were scarcely more pleased than was Sigismondo with the acquisition of this

* For the place occupied in the evolution of Italian scholarship by this Greek sage, see my *Revival of Learning*, Renaissance in Italy, part ii.

father of the Neopagan faith. Upon the tomb we still may read this legend: "Jemisthii Bizantii philosophor sua temp principis reliquum Sig. Pan. Mal. Pan. F. belli Pelop adversus Turcor regem Imp ob ingentem eruditorum quo flagrat amorem huc afferendum introque mittendum curavit MCCCCLXVI." Of the Latinity of the inscription much cannot be said; but it means that "Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, having served as general against the Turks in the Morea, induced by the great love with which he burns for all learned men, brought and placed here the remains of Gemisthus of Byzantium, the prince of the philosophers of his day."

Sigismondo's portrait, engraved on medals, and sculptured upon every frieze and point of vantage in the Cathedral of Rimini, well denotes the man. His face is seen in profile. The head, which is low and flat above the forehead, rising swiftly backward from the crown, carries a thick bushy shock of hair curling at the ends, such as the Italians call a *zazzera*. The eye is deeply sunk, with long, venomous, flat eyelids, like those which Leonardo gives to his most wicked faces. The nose is long and crooked, curved like a vulture's over a petulant mouth, with lips deliberately pressed together, as though it were necessary to control some nervous twitching. The cheek is broad, and its bone is strongly marked. Looking at these features in repose, we cannot but picture to our fancy what expression they might assume under a sudden fit of fury, when the sinews of the face were contracted with quivering spasms, and the lips writhed in sympathy with knit forehead and wrinkled eyelids.

Allusion has been made to the Cathedral of St. Francis at Rimini, as the great ornament of the town, and the chief monument of Sigismondo's fame. It is here that all the Malatesti lie. Here too is the chapel consecrated to Isotta, "*Divæ Isottæ Sacrum*;" and the tombs of the Malatesta ladies, "*Malatestorum domus he-*

roidum sepulchrum ;” and Sigismondo’s own grave with the cuckold’s horns and scornful epitaph. Nothing but the fact that the church is duly dedicated to St. Francis, and that its outer shell of classic marble encases an old Gothic edifice, remains to remind us that it is a Christian place of worship.* It has no sanctity, no spirit of piety. The pride of the tyrant whose legend—“Sigismundus Pandulphus Malatesta Pan. F. Fecit Anno Gratiae MCCCCL”—occupies every arch and string-course of the architecture, and whose coat-of-arms and portrait in medallion, with his cipher and his emblems of an elephant and a rose, are wrought in every piece of sculptured work throughout the building, seems so to fill this house of prayer that there is no room left for God. Yet the Cathedral of Rimini remains a monument of first-rate importance for all students who seek to penetrate the revived paganism of the fifteenth century. It serves also to bring a far more interesting Italian of that period than the tyrant of Rimini himself before our notice.

In the execution of his design, Sigismondo received the assistance of one of the most remarkable men of this or any other age. Leo Battista Alberti, a scion of the noble Florentine house of that name, born during the exile of his parents, and educated in the Venetian territory, was endowed by nature with aptitudes, faculties, and sensibilities so varied as to deserve the name of universal genius. Italy in the Renaissance period was rich in natures of this sort, to whom nothing that is strange or beautiful seemed unfamiliar, and who, gifted with a kind of divination, penetrated the secrets of the world by sympathy. To Pico della Mirandola, Leo-

* The account of this church given by Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pii Secundi Comment. ii. 92) deserves quotation: “Ædificavit tamen nobile templum Arimini in honorem divi Francisci, verum ita gentilibus operibus implevit, ut non tam Christianorum quam infidelium dæmones adorantium templum esse videatur.”

nardo da Vinci, and Michel Angelo Buonarroti may be added Leo Battista Alberti. That he achieved less than his great compeers, and that he now exists as the shadow of a mighty name, was the effect of circumstances. He came half a century too early into the world, and worked as a pioneer rather than a settler of the realm which Leonardo ruled as his demesne. Very early in his boyhood Alberti showed the versatility of his talents. The use of arms, the management of horses, music, painting, modelling for sculpture, mathematics, classical and modern literature, physical science as then comprehended, and all the bodily exercises proper to the estate of a young nobleman, were at his command. His biographer asserts that he was never idle, never subject to ennui or fatigue. He used to say that books at times gave him the same pleasure as brilliant jewels or perfumed flowers: hunger and sleep could not keep him from them then. At other times the letters on the page appeared to him like twining and contorted scorpions, so that he preferred to gaze on anything but written scrolls. He would then turn to music or painting, or to the physical sports in which he excelled. The language in which this alternation of passion and disgust for study is expressed bears on it the stamp of Alberti's peculiar temperament, his fervid and imaginative genius, instinct with subtle sympathies and strange repugnances. Flying from his study, he would then betake himself to the open air. No one surpassed him in running, in wrestling, in the force with which he cast his javelin or discharged his arrows. So sure was his aim and so skilful his cast, that he could fling a farthing from the pavement of the square, and make it ring against a church roof far above. When he chose to jump, he put his feet together and bounded over the shoulders of men standing erect upon the ground. On horseback he maintained perfect equilibrium, and seemed incapable of fatigue. The most restive and vicious animals trembled under him and became like

lambs. There was a kind of magnetism in the man. We read, besides these feats of strength and skill, that he took pleasure in climbing mountains, for no other purpose apparently than for the joy of being close to nature.

In this, as in many other of his instincts, Alberti was before his age. To care for the beauties of landscape unadorned by art, and to sympathize with sublime or rugged scenery, was not in the spirit of the Renaissance. Humanity occupied the attention of poets and painters; and the age was yet far distant when the pantheistic feeling for the world should produce the art of Wordsworth and of Turner. Yet a few great natures even then began to comprehend the charm and mystery which the Greeks had imaged in their Pan, the sense of an all-pervasive spirit in wild places, the feeling of a hidden want, the invisible tie which makes man a part of rocks and woods and streams around him. Petrarch had already ascended the summit of Mont Ventoux, to meditate, with an exaltation of the soul he scarcely understood, upon the scene spread at his feet and above his head. Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini delighted in wild places for no mere pleasure of the chase, but for the joy he took in communing with nature. How St. Francis found God in the sun and the air, the water and the stars, we know by his celebrated hymn: and of Dante's acute observation every canto of the *Divine Comedy* is witness.

Leo Alberti was touched in spirit by even a deeper and a stranger pathos than any of these men: "In the early spring, when he beheld the meadows and hills covered with flowers, and saw the trees and plants of all kinds bearing promise of fruit, his heart became exceeding sorrowful; and when in autumn he looked on fields heavy with harvest and orchards apple-laden, he felt such grief that many even saw him weep for the sadness of his soul." It would seem that he scarcely understood the source of this sweet trouble; for at such times he compared the sloth and inutility of

men with the industry and fertility of nature, as though this were the secret of his melancholy. A poet of our century has noted the same stirring of the spirit, and has striven to account for it :

Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Both Alberti and Tennyson have connected the *mal du pays* of the human soul for that ancient country of its birth, the mild Saturnian earth from which we sprang, with a sense of loss. It is the waste of human energy that affects Alberti ; the waste of human life touches the modern poet. Yet both perhaps have scarcely interpreted their own spirit ; for is not the true source of tears deeper and more secret ? Man is a child of nature in the simplest sense ; and the stirrings of the secular breasts that gave him suck, and on which he even now must hang, have potent influences over his emotions. Of Alberti's extraordinary sensitiveness to all such impressions many curious tales are told. The sight of refulgent jewels, of flowers, and of fair landscapes had the same effect upon his nerves as the sound of the Dorian mood upon the youths whom Pythagoras cured of passion by music. He found in them an anodyne for pain, a restoration from sickness. Like Walt Whitman, who adheres to nature by closer and more vital sympathy than any other poet of the modern world, Alberti felt the charm of excellent old age no less than that of florid youth. "On old men gifted with a noble presence and hale and vigorous, he gazed again and again, and said that he revered in them the delights of nature (*naturæ delitias*).” Beasts and birds and all living creatures moved him to admiration for the grace with which they had been gifted, each in his own kind. It is even said that he composed a funeral oration for a dog which he had loved and which died.

To this sensibility for all fair things in nature, Alberti added the charm of a singularly sweet temper and graceful conversation. The activity of his mind, which was always being exercised on subjects of grave speculation, removed him from the noise and bustle of commonplace society. He was somewhat silent, inclined to solitude, and of a pensive countenance; yet no man found him difficult of access: his courtesy was exquisite, and among familiar friends he was noted for the flashes of a delicate and subtle wit. Collections were made of his apothegms by friends, and some are recorded by his anonymous biographer.* Their finer perfume, as almost always happens with good sayings which do not contain the full pith of a proverb, but owe their force, in part at least, to the personality of their author, and to the happy moment of their production, has evanesced. Here, however, is one which seems still to bear the impress of Alberti's genius: "Gold is the soul of labor, and labor the slave of pleasure." Of women he used to say that their inconstancy was an antidote to their falseness; for if a woman could but persevere in what she undertook, all the fair works of men would be ruined. One of his strongest moral sentences is aimed at envy, from which he suffered much in his own life, and against which he guarded with a curious amount of caution. His own family grudged the distinction which his talents gained for him, and a dark story is told of a secret attempt made by them to assassinate him through his servants. Alberti met these ignoble jealousies with a stately calm and a sweet dignity of demeanor, never condescending to accuse his relatives, never seeking to retaliate, but acting always for the honor of his illustrious house. In the

* Almost all the facts of Alberti's life are to be found in the Latin biography included in Muratori. It has been conjectured, and not without plausibility, by the last editor of Alberti's complete works, Bonucci, that this Latin life was penned by Alberti himself.

same spirit of generosity he refused to enter into wordy warfare with detractors and calumniators, sparing the reputation even of his worst enemy when chance had placed him in his power. This moderation both of speech and conduct was especially distinguished in an age which tolerated the fierce invectives of Filelfo, and applauded the vindictive courage of Cellini. To money Alberti showed a calm indifference. He committed his property to his friends and shared with them in common. Nor was he less careless about vulgar fame, spending far more pains in the invention of machinery and the discovery of laws than in their publication to the world. His service was to knowledge, not to glory. Self-control was another of his eminent qualities. With the natural impetuosity of a large heart, and the vivacity of a trained athlete, he yet never allowed himself to be subdued by anger or by sensual impulses, but took pains to preserve his character unstained and dignified before the eyes of men. A story is told of him which may remind us of Goethe's determination to overcome his giddiness. In his youth his head was singularly sensitive to changes of temperature; but by gradual habituation he brought himself at last to endure the extremes of heat and cold bareheaded. In like manner he had a constitutional disgust for onions and honey, so powerful that the very sight of these things made him sick. Yet by constantly viewing and touching what was disagreeable, he conquered these dislikes; and proved that men have a complete mastery over what is merely instinctive in their nature. His courage corresponded to his splendid physical development. When a boy of fifteen, he severely wounded himself in the foot. The gash had to be probed and then sewn up. Alberti not only bore the pain of this operation without a groan, but helped the surgeon with his own hands; and effected a cure of the fever which succeeded, by the solace of singing to his cithern. For music he had a genius of the rarest order; and in paint-

ing he is said to have achieved success. Nothing, however, remains of his work; and from what Vasari says of it, we may fairly conclude that he gave less care to the execution of finished pictures than to drawings subsidiary to architectural and mechanical designs. His biographer relates that when he had completed a painting, he called children and asked them what it meant. If they did not know, he reckoned it a failure. He was also in the habit of painting from memory. While at Venice, he put on canvas the faces of friends at Florence whom he had not seen for months. That the art of painting was subservient in his estimation to mechanics is indicated by what we hear about the camera, in which he showed landscapes by day and the revolutions of the stars by night, so lively drawn that the spectators were affected with amazement. The semi-scientific impulse to extend man's mastery over nature, the magician's desire to penetrate secrets, which so powerfully influenced the development of Leonardo's genius, seems to have overcome the purely æsthetic instincts of Alberti, so that he became in the end neither a great artist like Raphael, nor a great discoverer like Galileo, but rather a clairvoyant to whom the miracles of nature and of art lie open.

After the first period of youth was over, Leo Battista Alberti devoted his great faculties and all his wealth of genius to the study of the law—then, as now, the quicksand of the noblest natures. The industry with which he applied himself to the civil and ecclesiastical codes broke his health. For recreation he composed a Latin comedy called *Philodoxeos*, which imposed upon the judgment of scholars, and was ascribed as a genuine antique to Lepidus, the comic poet. Feeling stronger, Alberti returned at the age of twenty to his law studies, and pursued them in the teeth of disadvantages. His health was still uncertain, and the fortune of an exile reduced him to the utmost want. It was no wonder that under these untoward circumstances even his Her-

culean strength gave way. Emaciated and exhausted, he lost the clearness of his eyesight, and became subject to arterial disturbances, which filled his ears with painful sounds. This nervous illness is not dissimilar to that which Rousseau describes in the confessions of his youth. In vain, however, his physicians warned Alberti of impending peril. A man of so much stanchness, accustomed to control his nature with an iron will, is not ready to accept advice. Alberti persevered in his studies, until at last the very seat of intellect was invaded. His memory began to fail him for names, while he still retained with wonderful accuracy whatever he had seen with his eyes. It was now impossible to think of law as a profession. Yet since he could not live without severe mental exercise, he had recourse to studies which tax the verbal memory less than the intuitive faculties of the reason. Physics and mathematics became his chief resource; and he devoted his energies to literature. His *Treatise on the Family* may be numbered among the best of those compositions on social and speculative subjects in which the Italians of the Renaissance sought to rival Cicero. His essays on the arts are mentioned by Vasari with sincere approbation. Comedies, interludes, orations, dialogues, and poems flowed with abundance from his facile pen. Some were written in Latin, which he commanded more than fairly; some in the Tuscan tongue, of which, owing to the long exile of his family in Lombardy, he is said to have been less a master. It was owing to this youthful illness, from which apparently his constitution never wholly recovered, that Alberti's genius was directed to architecture.

Through his friendship with Flavio Biondo, the famous Roman antiquary, Alberti received an introduction to Nicholas V. at the time when this, the first great pope of the Renaissance, was engaged in rebuilding the palaces and fortifications of Rome. Nicholas discerned the genius of the man, and employed him as

his chief counsellor in all matters of architecture. When the Pope died, he was able, while reciting his long Latin will upon his death-bed, to boast that he had restored the Holy See to its due dignity, and the Eternal City to the splendor worthy of the seat of Christendom. The accomplishment of the second part of his work he owed to the genius of Alberti. After doing thus much for Rome under Thomas of Sarzana, and before beginning to beautify Florence at the instance of the Rucellai family, Alberti entered the service of the Malatesta, and undertook to remodel the Cathedral of St. Francis at Rimini. He found it a plain Gothic structure with apse and side chapels. Such churches are common enough in Italy, where pointed architecture never developed its true character of complexity and richness, but was doomed to the vast vacuity exemplified in St. Petronio of Bologna. He left it a strange medley of mediæval and Renaissance work, a symbol of that dissolving scene in the world's pantomime, when the spirit of classic art, as yet but little comprehended, was encroaching on the early Christian taste. Perhaps the mixture of styles so startling in St. Francesco ought not to be laid to the charge of Alberti, who had to execute the task of turning a Gothic into a classic building. All that he could do was to alter the whole exterior of the church, by affixing a screen-work of Roman arches and Corinthian pilasters, so as to hide the old design and yet to leave the main features of the fabric, the windows and doors especially, *in statu quo*. With the interior he dealt upon the same general principle, by not disturbing its structure, while he covered every available square inch of surface with decorations alien to the Gothic manner. Externally, St. Francesco is perhaps the most original and graceful of the many attempts made by Italian builders to fuse the mediæval and the classic styles. For Alberti attempted nothing less. A century elapsed before Palladio, approaching the problem from a different point

of view, restored the antique in its purity, and erected in the Palazzo della Ragione of Vicenza an almost unique specimen of resuscitated Roman art.

Internally, the beauty of the church is wholly due to its exquisite wall-ornaments. These consist for the most part of low reliefs in a soft white stone, many of them thrown out upon a blue ground in the style of Della Robbia. Allegorical figures designed with the purity of outline we admire in Botticelli, draperies that Burne Jones might copy, troops of singing boys in the manner of Donatello, great angels traced upon the stone so delicately that they seem to be rather drawn than sculptured, statuettes in niches, personifications of all arts and sciences alternating with half-bestial shapes of satyrs and sea-children—such are the forms that fill the spaces of the chapel walls, and climb the pilasters, and fret the arches, in such abundance that had the whole church been finished as it was designed, it would have presented one splendid though bizarre effect of incrustation. Heavy screens of Verona marble, emblazoned in open arabesques with the ciphers of Sigismondo and Isotta, with coats-of-arms, emblems, and medallion portraits, shut the chapels from the nave. Who produced all this sculpture it is difficult to say. Some of it is very good; much is indifferent. We may hazard the opinion that, besides Bernardo Ciuffagni, of whom Vasari speaks, some pupils of Donatello and Benedetto da Majano worked at it. The influence of the sculptors of Florence is everywhere perceptible.

Whatever be the merit of these reliefs, there is no doubt that they fairly represent one of the most interesting moments in the history of modern art. Gothic inspiration had failed; the early Tuscan style of the Pisani had been worked out; Michael Angelo was yet far distant, and the abundance of classic models had not overwhelmed originality. The sculptors of the school of Ghiberti and Donatello, who are represented in this church, were essential-

ly pictorial, preferring low to high relief, and relief in general to detached figures. Their style, like the style of Boiardo in poetry, of Botticelli in painting, is specific to Italy in the middle of the fifteenth century. Mediæval standards of taste were giving way to classical, Christian sentiment to Pagan; yet the imitation of the antique had not been carried so far as to efface the spontaneity of the artist, and enough remained of Christian feeling to tinge the fancy with a grave and sweet romance. The sculptor had the skill and mastery to express his slightest shade of thought with freedom, spirit, and precision. Yet his work showed no sign of conventionality, no adherence to prescribed rules. Every outline, every fold of drapery, every attitude, was pregnant, to the artist's own mind at any rate, with meaning. In spite of its symbolism, what he wrought was never mechanically figurative, but gifted with the independence of its own beauty, vital with an in-breathed spirit of life. It was a happy moment, when art had reached consciousness, and the artist had not yet become self-conscious. The hand and the brain then really worked together for the procreation of new forms of grace, not for the repetition of old models, or for the invention of the strange and startling. "Delicate, sweet, and captivating" are good adjectives to express the effect produced upon the mind by the contemplation even of the average work of this period.

To study the flowing lines of the great angels traced upon the walls of the Chapel of St. Sigismund in the Cathedral of Rimini, to follow the undulations of their drapery that seems to float, to feel the dignified urbanity of all their gestures, is like listening to one of those clear early Italian compositions for the voice, which surpasses in suavity of tone and grace of movement all that Music in her full-grown vigor has produced. There is, indeed, something infinitely charming in the crepuscular moments of the human mind. Whether it be the rath loveliness of an art still im-

mature, or the beauty of art upon the wane—whether, in fact, the twilight be of morning or of evening, we find in the masterpieces of such periods a placid calm and chastened pathos, as of a spirit self-withdrawn from vulgar cares, which in the full light of meridian splendor is lacking. In the Church of St. Francesco at Rimini the tempered clearness of the dawn is just about to broaden into day.

RAVENNA.

THE Emperor Augustus chose Ravenna for one of his two naval stations, and in course of time a new city arose by the sea-shore, which received the name of Portus Classis. Between this harbor and the mother city a third town sprang up, and was called Caesarea. Time and neglect, the ravages of war, and the encroaching powers of Nature, have destroyed these settlements, and nothing now remains of the three cities but Ravenna. It would seem that in classical times Ravenna stood, like modern Venice, in the centre of a huge lagoon, the fresh waters of the Ronco and the Po mixing with the salt waves of the Adriatic round its very walls. The houses of the city were built on piles; canals instead of streets formed the means of communication, and these were always filled with water artificially conducted from the southern estuary of the Po. Round Ravenna extended a vast morass, for the most part under shallow water, but rising at intervals into low islands like the Lido or Murano or Torcello which surround Venice. These islands were celebrated for their fertility: the vines and fig-trees and pomegranates, springing from a fat and fruitful soil, watered with constant moisture, and fostered by a mild sea-wind and liberal sunshine, yielded crops that for luxuriance and quality surpassed the harvests of any orchards on the mainland. All the conditions of life in old Ravenna seem to have resembled those of modern Venice; the people went about in gondolas, and in the early morning barges laden with fresh fruit or meat and vegetables flocked from all quarters to the city

of the sea.* Water also had to be procured from the neighboring shore, for, as Martial says, a well at Ravenna was more valuable than a vineyard. Again, between the city and the mainland ran a long low causeway all across the lagoon like that on which the trains now glide into Venice. Strange to say, the air of Ravenna was remarkably salubrious: this fact, and the ease of life that prevailed there, and the security afforded by the situation of the town, rendered it a most desirable retreat for the monarchs of Italy during those troublous times in which the empire nodded to its fall. Honorius retired to its lagoons for safety; Odoacer, who dethroned the last Cæsar of the West, succeeded him; and was in turn supplanted by Theodoric the Ostrogoth. Ravenna, as we see it now, recalls the peaceful and half-Roman rule of the great Gothic king. His palace, his churches, and the mausoleum in which his daughter Amalasuntha laid the hero's bones, have survived the sieges of Belisarius and Astolphus, the conquest of Pepin, the bloody quarrels of iconoclasts with the children of the Roman Church, the mediæval wars of Italy, the victory of Gaston de Foix, and still stand gorgeous with marbles and mosaics in spite of time and the decay of all around them.

As early as the sixth century, the sea had already retreated to such a distance from Ravenna that orchards and gardens were cultivated on the spot where once the galleys of the Cæsars rode at anchor. Groves of pines sprang up along the shore, and in their lofty tops the music of the wind moved like the ghost of waves and breakers plunging upon distant sands. This *Pinetum* stretches along the shore of the Adriatic for about forty miles, forming a belt of variable width between the great marsh and the tumbling sea. From a distance the bare stems and velvet crowns

* We may compare with Venice what is known about the ancient Hellenic city of Sybaris. Sybaris and Ravenna were the Greek and Roman Venice of antiquity.

of the pine-trees stand up like palms that cover an oasis on Arabian sands; but at a nearer view the trunks detach themselves from an inferior forest-growth of juniper and thorn and ash and oak, the tall roofs of the stately firs shooting their breadth of sheltering greenery above the lower and less sturdy brushwood. It is hardly possible to imagine a more beautiful and impressive scene than that presented by these long alleys of imperial pines. They grow so thickly one behind another that we might compare them to the pipes of a great organ, or the pillars of a Gothic church, or the basaltic columns of the Giant's Causeway. Their tops are ever green and laden with the heavy cones from which Ravenna draws considerable wealth. Scores of peasants are quartered on the outskirts of the forest, whose business it is to scale the pines and rob them of their fruit at certain seasons of the year. Afterwards they dry the fir-cones in the sun, until the nuts which they contain fall out. The empty husks are sold for fire-wood, and the kernels in their stony shells reserved for exportation. You may see the peasants, men, women, and boys, sorting them by millions, drying and sifting them upon the open spaces of the wood, and packing them in sacks to send abroad through Italy. The *pinocchi*, or kernels, of the stone-pine are largely used in cookery, and those of Ravenna are prized for their good quality and aromatic flavor. When roasted or pounded, they taste like a softer and more mealy kind of almonds. The task of gathering this harvest is not a little dangerous. They have to cut notches in the straight shafts, and having climbed, often, to the height of eighty feet, to lean upon the branches, and detach the fir-cones with a pole—and this for every tree. Some lives, they say, are yearly lost in the business.

As may be imagined, the spaces of this great forest form the haunt of innumerable living creatures. Lizards run about by myriads in the grass. Doves coo among the branches of the

pinces, and nightingales pour their full-throated music all day and night from thickets of white-thorn and acacia. The air is sweet with aromatic scents: the resin of the pine and juniper, the may-flowers and acacia-blossoms, the violets that spring by thousands in the moss, the wild roses and faint honeysuckles which throw fragrant arms from bough to bough of ash or maple, join to make one most delicious perfume. And though the air upon the neighboring marsh is poisonous, here it is dry, and spreads a genial health. The sea-wind murmuring through these thickets at night-fall or misty sunrise conveys no fever to the peasants stretched among their flowers. They watch the red rays of sunset flaming through the columns of the leafy hall, and flaring on its fretted rafters of entangled boughs; they see the stars come out, and Hesper gleam, an eye of brightness, among dewy branches; the moon walks silver-footed on the velvet tree-tops, while they sleep beside the camp-fires; fresh morning wakes them to the sound of birds and scent of thyme and twinkling of dewdrops on the grass around. Meanwhile ague, fever, and death have been stalking all night long about the plain, within a few yards of their couch, and not one pestilential breath has reached the charmed precincts of the forest.

You may ride or drive for miles along green aisles between the pines in perfect solitude; and yet the creatures of the wood, the sunlight and the birds, the flowers and tall majestic columns at your side, prevent all sense of loneliness or fear. Huge oxen haunt the wilderness—gray creatures, with mild eyes and spreading horns and stealthy tread. Some are patriarchs of the forest, the fathers and the mothers of many generations who have been carried from their sides to serve in ploughs or wagons on the Lombard plain. Others are yearling calves, intractable and ignorant of labor. In order to subdue them to the yoke, it is requisite to take them very early from their native glades, or else they

chafe and pine away with weariness. Then there is a sullen canal, which flows through the forest from the marshes to the sea; it is alive with frogs and newts and snakes. You may see these serpents basking on the surface among thickets of the flowering rush, or coiled about the lily leaves and flowers—lithe monsters, slippery and speckled, the tyrants of the fen.

It is said that when Dante was living at Ravenna he would spend whole days alone among the forest glades, thinking of Florence and her civil wars, and meditating cantos of his poem. Nor have the influences of the pine wood failed to leave their trace upon his verse. The charm of its summer solitude seems to have sunk into his soul; for when he describes the whispering of winds and singing birds among the boughs of his terrestrial paradise, he says:

Non però dal lor esser dritto sparte
 Tanto, che gli augelletti per le cime
 Lasciasser d'operare ogni lor arte:
 Ma con piena letizia l'aure prime,
 Cantando, ricevano intra le foglie,
 Che tenevan bordone alle sue rime
 Tal, qual di ramo in ramo si raccoglie
 Per la pineta in sul lito di Chiassi,
 Quand' Eolo Scirocco fuor discioglie.

With these verses in our minds, while wandering down the grassy aisles, beside the waters of the solitary place, we seem to meet that lady singing as she went, and plucking flower by flower, “like Proserpine when Ceres lost a daughter, and she lost her spring.” There, too, the vision of the griffin and the car, of singing maidens, and of Beatrice descending to the sound of Benedictus and of falling flowers, her flaming robe and mantle green as grass, and veil of white, and olive crown, all flashed upon the poet's inner eye, and he remembered how he bowed before her when a boy. There is yet another passage in which it is difficult

to believe that Dante had not the pine forest in his mind. When Virgil and the poet were waiting in anxiety before the gates of Dis, when the Furies on the wall were tearing their breasts and crying, "Venga Medusa, e si 'l farem di smalto," suddenly across the hideous river came a sound like that which whirlwinds make among the shattered branches and bruised stems of forest trees; and Dante, looking out with fear upon the foam and spray and vapor of the flood, saw thousands of the damned flying before the face of one who forded Styx with feet unwet. "Like frogs," he says, "they fled, who scurry through the water at the sight of their foe, the serpent, till each squats and hides himself close to the ground." The picture of the storm among the trees might well have occurred to Dante's mind beneath the roof of pine boughs. Nor is there any place in which the simile of the frogs and water-snake attains such dignity and grandeur. I must confess that till I saw the ponds and marshes of Ravenna, I used to fancy that the comparison was somewhat below the greatness of the subject; but there so grave a note of solemnity and desolation is struck, the scale of Nature is so large, and the serpents coiling in and out among the lily leaves and flowers are so much in their right place, that they suggest a scene by no means unworthy of Dante's conception.

Nor is Dante the only singer who has invested this wood with poetical associations. It is well known that Boccaccio laid his story of *Honorio* in the pine forest, and every student of English literature must be familiar with the noble tale in verse which Dryden has founded on this part of the *Decameron*. We all of us have followed Theodore, and watched with him the tempest swelling in the grove, and seen the hapless ghost pursued by demon hounds and hunter down the glades. This story should be read while storms are gathering upon the distant sea, or thunder-clouds descending from the Apennines, and when the pines

begin to rock and surge beneath the stress of laboring winds. Then runs the sudden flash of lightning like a rapier through the boughs, the rain streams hissing down, and the thunder "breaks like a whole sea overhead."

With the Pinetum the name of Byron will be forever associated. During his two years' residence in Ravenna he used to haunt its wilderness, riding alone or in the company of friends. The inscription placed above the entrance to the house he occupied alludes to it as one of the objects which principally attracted the poet to the neighborhood of Ravenna: "Impaziente di visitare l' antica selva, che ispirò già il Divino e Giovanni Boccaccio." We know, however, that a more powerful attraction, in the person of the Countess Guiccioli, maintained his fidelity to "that place of old renown, once in the Adrian Sea, Ravenna."

Between the Bosco, as the people of Ravenna call this pine wood, and the city, the marsh stretches for a distance of about three miles. It is a plain intersected by dikes and ditches, and mapped out into innumerable rice-fields. For more than half a year it lies under water, and during the other months exhales a pestilential vapor, which renders it as uninhabitable as the Roman Campagna; yet in spring-time this dreary flat is even beautiful. The young blades of the rice shoot up above the water, delicately green and tender. The ditches are lined with flowering rush and golden flags, while white and yellow lilies sleep in myriads upon the silent pools. Tamarisks wave their pink and silver tresses by the road, and wherever a plot of mossy earth emerges from the marsh, it gleams with purple orchises and flaming marigolds; but the soil beneath is so treacherous and spongy that these splendid blossoms grow like flowers in dreams or fairy stories. You try in vain to pick them; they elude your grasp, and flourish in security beyond the reach of arm or stick.

Such is the sight of the old town of Classis. Not a vestige of

the Roman city remains, not a dwelling or a ruined tower, nothing but the ancient church of S. Apollinare in Classe. Of all desolate buildings this is the most desolate. Not even the deserted grandeur of S. Paolo beyond the walls of Rome can equal it. Its bare round campanile gazes at the sky, which here vaults only sea and plain—a perfect dome, star-spangled like the roof of Galla Placidia's tomb. Ravenna lies low to west, the pine wood stretches away in long monotony to east. There is nothing else to be seen except the spreading marsh, bounded by dim snowy Alps and purple Apennines, so very far away that the level rack of summer clouds seem more attainable and real. What sunsets and sunrises that tower must see; what glaring lurid after-glows in August, when the red light scowls upon the pestilential fen; what sheets of sullen vapor rolling over it in autumn; what breathless heats, and rain-clouds big with thunder; what silences; what unimpeded blasts of winter winds! One old monk tends this deserted spot. He has the huge church, with its echoing aisles and marble columns and giddy bell-tower and cloistered corridors, all to himself. At rare intervals, priests from Ravenna come to sing some special mass at these cold altars; pious folks make vows to pray upon their mouldy steps and kiss the relics which are shown on great occasions. But no one stays; they hurry, after muttering their prayers, from the fever-stricken spot, reserving their domestic pieties and customary devotions for the brighter and newer chapels of the fashionable churches in Ravenna. So the old monk is left alone to sweep the marsh water from his church floor, and to keep the green moss from growing too thickly on its monuments. A clammy conferva covers everything except the mosaics upon tribune, roof, and clerestory, which defy the course of age. Christ on his throne *sedet aeternumque sedebit*: the saints around him glitter with their pitiless uncompromising eyes and wooden gestures, as if twelve centuries had not passed

over them, and they were nightmares only dreamed last night, and rooted in a sick man's memory. For those gaunt and solemn forms there is no change of life or end of days. No fever touches them; no dampness of the wind and rain loosens their firm cement. They stare with senseless faces in bitter mockery of men who live and die and moulder away beneath. Their poor old guardian told us it was a weary life. He has had the fever three times, and does not hope to survive many more Septembers. The very water that he drinks is brought him from Ravenna; for the vast fen, though it pours its overflow upon the church floor, and spreads like a lake around, is death to drink. The monk had a gentle woman's voice and mild brown eyes. What terrible crime had consigned him to this living tomb? For what past sorrow is he weary of his life? What anguish of remorse has driven him to such a solitude? Yet he looked simple and placid; his melancholy was subdued and calm, as if life were over for him, and he were waiting for death to come with a friend's greeting upon noiseless wings some summer night across the fen-lands in a cloud of soft destructive fever-mist.

Another monument upon the plain is worthy of a visit. It is the so-called Colonna dei Francesi, a cinquecento pillar of Ionic design, erected on the spot where Gaston de Foix expired victorious after one of the bloodiest battles ever fought. The Ronco, a straight, sluggish stream, flows by the lonely spot; mason-bees have covered with laborious stucco-work the scrolls and leafage of its ornaments, confounding epitaphs and trophies under their mud houses. A few cypress-trees stand round it, and the dogs and chickens of a neighboring farm-yard make it their rendezvous. Those mason-bees are like posterity, which settles down upon the ruins of a Baalbec or a Luxor, setting up its tents and filling the fair spaces of Hellenic or Egyptian temples with clay hovels. Nothing differs but the scale; and while the bees content them-

selves with filling up and covering, man destroys the silent places of the past which he appropriates.

In Ravenna itself, perhaps what strikes us most is the abrupt transition everywhere discernible from monuments of vast antiquity to buildings of quite modern date. There seems to be no interval between the marbles and mosaics of Justinian or Theodoric and the insignificant frippery of the last century. The churches of Ravenna—S. Vitale, S. Apollinare, and the rest—are too well known and have been too often described by enthusiastic antiquaries, to need a detailed notice in this place. Every one is aware that the ecclesiastical customs and architecture of the early Church can be studied in greater perfection here than elsewhere. Not even the basilicas and mosaics of Rome, nor those of Palermo and Monreale, are equal for historical interest to those of Ravenna. Yet there is not one single church which remains entirely unaltered and unspoiled. The imagination has to supply the atrium or outer portico from one building, the vaulted baptistery with its marble font from another, the pulpits and amboes from a third, the tribune from a fourth, the round brick bell-tower from a fifth, and then to cover all the concave roofs and chapel walls with grave and glittering mosaics.

There is nothing more beautiful in decorative art than the mosaics of such tiny buildings as the tomb of Galla Placidia or the chapel of the bishop's palace. They are like jewelled and enamelled cases; not an inch of wall can be seen which is not covered with elaborate patterns of the brightest colors. Tall date-palms spring from the floor with fruit and birds among their branches, and between them stand the pillars and apostles of the Church. In the spandrels and lunettes above the arches and the windows angels fly with white, extended wings. On every vacant place are scrolls and arabesques of foliage—birds and beasts, doves drinking from the vase, and peacocks spreading gorgeons plumes—a maze

of green and gold and blue. Overhead, the vault is powdered with stars gleaming upon the deepest azure, and in the midst is set an aureole embracing the majestic head of Christ, or else the symbol of the sacred fish, or the hand of the Creator pointing from a cloud. In Galla Placidia's tomb these storied vaults spring above the sarcophagi of empresses and emperors, each lying in the place where he was laid more than twelve centuries ago. The light which struggles through the narrow windows serves to harmonize the brilliant hues and make a gorgeous gloom.

Besides these more general and decorative subjects, many of the churches are adorned with historical mosaics, setting forth the Bible narrative or incidents from the life of Christian emperors and kings. In S. Apollinare Nuovo there is a most interesting treble series of such mosaics extending over both walls of the nave. On the left hand, as we enter, we see the town of Classis; on the right the palace of Theodoric, its doors and loggie rich with curtains, and its friezes blazing with colored ornaments. From the city gate of Classis virgins issue and proceed in a long line until they reach Madonna seated on a throne with Christ upon her knees and the three kings in adoration at her feet. From Theodoric's palace door a similar procession of saints and martyrs carry us to Christ surrounded by archangels. Above this double row of saints and virgins stand the fathers and prophets of the Church, and highest underneath the roof are pictures from the life of our Lord. It will be remembered in connection with these subjects that the women sat upon the left and the men upon the right side of the church. Above the tribune, at the east end of the church, it was customary to represent the Creative Hand, or the monogram of the Saviour, or the head of Christ with the letters Λ and Ω . Moses and Elijah frequently stand on either side to symbolize the transfiguration, while the saints and bishops specially connected with the church appeared upon a lower row.

Then on the side walls were depicted such subjects as Justinian and Theodora among their courtiers, or the grant of the privileges of the church to its first founder from imperial patrons, with symbols of the old Hebraic ritual—Abel's lamb, the sacrifice of Isaac, Melchisedec's offering of bread and wine—which were regarded as the types of Christian ceremonies. The baptistery was adorned with appropriate mosaics representing Christ's baptism in Jordan.

Generally speaking, one is struck with the dignity of these designs, and especially with the combined majesty and sweetness of the face of Christ. The sense for harmony of line displayed in their composition is marvellous. It would be curious to trace in detail the remnants of classical treatment which may be discerned—Jordan, for instance, pours his water from an urn like a river-god crowned with sedge—or to show what points of ecclesiastical tradition are established by these ancient monuments. We find Mariolatry already imminent, the names of the three kings, Kaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, the four evangelists as we now recognize them, and many of the rites and vestments which ritualists of all denominations regard with superstitious reverence.

There are two sepulchral monuments in Ravenna which cannot be passed over unnoticed. The one is that of Theodoric the Goth, crowned by its semisphere of solid stone, a mighty tomb, well worthy of the conqueror and king. It stands in a green field, surrounded by acacias, where the nightingales sing ceaselessly in May. The mason-bees have covered it and the water has invaded its sepulchral vaults. In spite of many trials, it seems that human art is unable to pump out the pond and clear the frogs and efts from the chamber where the great Goth was laid by Amalasuntha.

The other is Dante's temple, with its bass-relief and withered garlands. The story of his burial and of the discovery of his real tomb is fresh in the memory of every one. But the "little cupo-

la, more neat than solemn," of which Lord Byron speaks, will continue to be the goal of many a pilgrimage. For myself—though I remember Chateaubriand's bareheaded genuflection on its threshold, Alfieri's passionate prostration at the altar-tomb, and Byron's offering of poems on the poet's shrine—I confess that a single canto of the *Inferno*, a single passage of the *Vita Nuova*, seems more full of soul-stirring associations than the place where, centuries ago, the mighty dust was laid. It is the spirit that lives and makes alive. And Dante's spirit seems more present with us under the pine branches of the Bosco than beside his real or fancied tomb. "He is risen"—"Lo, I am with you alway"—these are the words that ought to haunt us in a burying-ground. There is something affected and self-conscious in overpowering grief or enthusiasm or humiliation at a tomb.

CANOSSA.

ITALY is less the land of what is venerable in antiquity than of beauty, by divine right young eternally in spite of age. This is due partly to her history and art and literature, partly to the temper of the races who have made her what she is, and partly to her natural advantages. Her oldest architectural remains, the temples of Præstum and Girgenti, or the gates of Perugia and Volterra, are so adapted to Italian landscape and so graceful in their massive strength, that we forget the centuries which have passed over them. We leap as by a single bound from the times of Roman greatness to the new birth of humanity in the fourteenth century, forgetting the many years during which Italy, like the rest of Europe, was buried in what our ancestors called Gothic barbarism. The illumination cast upon the classic period by the literature of Rome and by the memory of her great men is so vivid that we feel the days of the republic and the empire to be near us; while the Italian Renaissance is so truly a revival of that former splendor, a resumption of the music interrupted for a season, that it is extremely difficult to form any conception of the five long centuries which elapsed between the Lombard invasion in 568 and the accession of Hildebrand to the Pontificate in 1073. So true is it that nothing lives and has reality for us but what is spiritual, intellectual, self-possessed in personality and consciousness. When the Egyptian priest said to Solon, "You Greeks are always children," he intended a gentle sarcasm, but he implied a compliment; for the quality of imperishable youth belonged to the Hellenic spirit, and has become the heritage of every race which partook

of it. And this spirit in no common degree has been shared by the Italians of the earlier and the later classic epoch. The land is full of monuments pertaining to those two brilliant periods; and whenever the voice of poet has spoken or the hand of artist has been at work, that spirit, as distinguished from the spirit of mediævalism, has found expression.

Yet it must be remembered that during the five centuries above-mentioned Italy was given over to Lombards, Franks, and Germans. Feudal institutions, alien to the social and political ideals of the classic world, took a tolerably firm hold on the country. The Latin element remained silent, passive, in abeyance, undergoing an important transformation. It was in the course of those five hundred years that the Italians as a modern people, separable from their Roman ancestors, were formed. At the close of this obscure passage in Italian history, their communes, the foundation of Italy's future independence and the source of her peculiar national development, appeared in all the vigor and audacity of youth. At its close the Italian genius presented Europe with its greatest triumph of constructive ability, the papacy. At its close, again, the series of supreme artistic achievements, starting with the architecture of churches and public palaces, passing on to sculpture and painting, and culminating in music, which only ended with the temporary extinction of national vitality in the seventeenth century, was simultaneously begun in all the provinces of the peninsula.

So important were these five centuries of incubation for Italy, and so little is there left of them to arrest the attention of the student, dazzled as he is by the ever-living glories of Greece, Rome, and the Renaissance, that a visit to the ruins of Canossa is almost a duty. There, in spite of himself, by the very isolation and forlorn abandonment of what was once so formidable a seat of feudal despotism and ecclesiastical tyranny, he is forced to confront the

obscure but mighty spirit of the Middle Ages. There, if anywhere, the men of those iron-hearted times anterior to the Crusades will acquire distinctness for his imagination when he recalls the three main actors in the drama enacted on the summit of Canossa's rock in the bitter winter of 1077.

Canossa lies almost due south of Reggio d' Emilia, upon the slopes of the Apennines. Starting from Reggio, the carriage-road keeps to the plain for some while in a westerly direction, and then bends away towards the mountains. As we approach their spurs the ground begins to rise. The rich Lombard tilth of maize and vine gives place to English-looking hedgerows, lined with oaks, and studded with handsome dark tufts of green hellebore. The hills descend in melancholy earth-heaps on the plain, crowned here and there with ruined castles. Four of these mediæval strongholds, called Bianello, Montevetro, Monteluzzo, and Montezano, give the name of Quattro Castelli to the commune. The most important of them, Bianello, which, next to Canossa, was the strongest fortress possessed by the Countess Matilda and her ancestors, still presents a considerable mass of masonry, roofed, and habitable. The group formed a kind of advance-guard for Canossa against attack from Lombardy. After passing Quattro Castelli, we enter the hills, climbing gently upward between barren slopes of ashy gray earth—the débris of most ancient Apennines—crested at favorable points with lonely towers. In truth, the whole country bristles with ruined forts, making it clear that during the Middle Ages Canossa was but the centre of a great military system, the core and kernel of a fortified position which covered an area to be measured by scores of square miles, reaching far into the mountains, and buttressed on the plain. As yet, however, after nearly two hours' driving, Canossa has not come in sight. At last a turn in the road discloses an opening in the valley of the Enza to the left. Up this lateral gorge we see first the Castle

of Rossena, on its knoll of solid red rock, flaming in the sunlight ; and then, further withdrawn, detached from all surrounding objects, and reared aloft as though to sweep the sea of waved and broken hills around it, a sharp horn of hard white stone. That is Canossa—the *alba Canossa*, the *candida petra* of its rhyming chronicler. There is no mistaking the commanding value of its situation. At the same time the brilliant whiteness of Canossa's rocky hill, contrasted with the red gleam of Rossena, and outlined against the prevailing dullness of these earthy Apennines, secures a picturesque individuality concordant with its unique history and unrivalled strength.

There is still a journey of two hours before the castle can be reached, and this may be performed on foot or horseback. The path winds upward over broken ground ; following the *arête* of curiously jumbled and thwarted hill-slopes ; passing beneath the battlements of Rossena, whence the unfortunate Everelina threw herself in order to escape the savage love of her lord and jailer ; and then skirting those horrid earthen *balze* which are so common and so unattractive a feature of Apennine scenery. The most hideous *balze* to be found in the length and breadth of Italy are probably those of Volterra, from which the citizens themselves recoil with a kind of terror, and which lure melancholy men by intolerable fascination on to suicide. Forever crumbling, altering with frost and rain, discharging gloomy glaciers of slow-crawling mud, and scarring the hill-side with tracts of barrenness, these earth-precipices are among the most ruinous and uncomfortable failures of nature. They have not even so much of wildness or grandeur as forms the saving merit of nearly all wasteful things in the world, and can only be classed with the desolate *ghiare* of Italian river-beds.

Such as they are, these *balze* form an appropriate preface to the gloomy and repellent isolation of Canossa. The rock towers from a

narrow platform to the height of rather more than one hundred and sixty feet from its base. The top is fairly level, forming an irregular triangle, of which the greatest length is about two hundred and sixty feet, and the width about one hundred feet. Scarcely a vestige of any building can be traced either upon the platform or the summit, with the exception of a broken wall and windows supposed to belong to the end of the sixteenth century. The ancient castle, with its triple circuit of walls, enclosing barracks for the garrison, lodgings for the lord and his retainers, a stately church, a sumptuous monastery, storehouses, stables, workshops, and all the various buildings of a fortified stronghold, have utterly disappeared. The very passage of approach cannot be ascertained; for it is doubtful whether the present irregular path that scales the western face of the rock be really the remains of some old staircase, corresponding to that by which Mont St. Michel in Normandy is ascended. One thing is tolerably certain—that the three walls of which we hear so much from the chroniclers, and which played so picturesque a part in the drama of Henry IV.'s penance, surrounded the cliff at its base, and embraced a large acreage of ground. The citadel itself must have been but the acropolis or keep of an extensive fortress.

There has been plenty of time since the year 1255, when the people of Reggio sacked and destroyed Canossa, for Nature to resume her undisputed sway by obliterating the handiwork of men; and at present Nature forms the chief charm of Canossa. Lying one afternoon of May on the crisp short grass at the edge of a precipice purple with iris in full blossom, I surveyed, from what were once the battlements of Matilda's castle, a prospect than which there is none more spirit-stirring, by reason of its beauty and its manifold associations, in Europe. The lower castle-crowded hills have sunk. Reggio lies at our feet, shut in between the crests of Monte Carboniano and Monte delle Celle. Beyond

Reggio stretches Lombardy—the fairest and most memorable battle-field of nations, the richest and most highly cultivated garden of civilized industry. Nearly all the Lombard cities may be seen, some of them faint like bluish films of vapor, some clear with dome and spire. There is Modena and her Ghirlandina. Carpi, Parma, Mirandola, Verona, Mantua, lie well-defined and russet on the flat green map; and there flashes a bend of lordly Po; and there the Euganeans rise like islands, telling us where Padua and Ferrara nestle in the amethystine haze. Beyond and above all to the northward sweep the Alps, tossing their silvery crests up into the cloudless sky from the violet mist that girds their flanks and drowns their basements. Monte Adamello and the Ortler, the cleft of the Brenner, and the sharp peaks of the Venetian Alps are all distinctly visible. An eagle flying straight from our eyrie might traverse Lombardy and light among the snow-fields of the Valtelline between sunrise and sundown. Nor is the prospect tame to southward. Here the Apennines roll, billow above billow, in majestic desolation, soaring to snow summits in the Pellegrino region. As our eye attempts to thread that labyrinth of hill and vale, we tell ourselves that those roads wind to Tuscany, and yonder stretches Garfagnana, where Ariosto lived and mused in honorable exile from the world he loved.

It was by one of the mountain passes that lead from Lucca northward that the first founder of Canossa is said to have travelled early in the tenth century. Sigifredo, if the tradition may be trusted, was very wealthy; and with his money he bought lands and signorial rights at Reggio, bequeathing to his children, when he died, about 945, a patrimony which they developed into a petty kingdom. Azzo, his second son, fortified Canossa, and made it his principal place of residence. When Lothair, King of Italy, died, in 950, leaving his beautiful widow to the ill-treatment of his successor, Berenger, Adelaide found a protector in

this Azzo. She had been imprisoned on the Lake of Garda; but managing to escape in man's clothes to Mantua, she thence sent news of her misfortunes to Canossa. Azzo lost no time in riding with his knights to her relief, and brought her back in safety to his mountain fastness. It is related that Azzo was afterwards instrumental in calling Otho into Italy and procuring his marriage with Adelaide, in consequence of which events Italy became a fief of the Empire. Owing to the part he played at this time, the Lord of Canossa was recognized as one of the most powerful vassals of the German emperor in Lombardy. Honors were heaped upon him; and he grew so rich and formidable that Berenger, the titular King of Italy, laid siege to his fortress of Canossa. The memory of this siege, which lasted for three years and a half, is said still to linger in the popular traditions of the place. When Azzo died, at the end of the tenth century, he left to his son Tedaldo the title of Count of Reggio and Modena; and this title was soon after raised to that of Marquis. The Marches governed as Vicar of the Empire by Tedaldo included Reggio, Modena, Ferrara, Brescia, and probably Mantua. They stretched, in fact, across the north of Italy, forming a quadrilateral between the Alps and Apennines. Like his father, Tedaldo adhered consistently to the imperial party; and when he died and was buried at Canossa, he in his turn bequeathed to his son Bonifazio a power and jurisdiction increased by his own abilities. Bonifazio held the state of a sovereign at Canossa, adding the Duchy of Tuscany to his father's fiefs, and meeting the allied forces of the Lombard barons in the field of Coviolo like an independent potentate. His power and splendor were great enough to rouse the jealousy of the emperor; but Henry III. seems to have thought it more prudent to propitiate this proud vassal, and to secure his kindness, than to attempt his humiliation. Bonifazio married Beatrice, daughter of Frederick, Duke of Lorraine—her whose marble

sarcophagus in the Campo Santo at Pisa is said to have inspired Niccola Pisano with his new style of sculpture. Their only child, Matilda, was born, probably at Lucca, in 1046; and six years after her birth, Bonifazio, who had swayed his subjects like an iron-handed tyrant, was murdered. To the great house of Canossa, the rulers of one third of Italy, there now remained only two women, Bonifazio's widow, Beatrice, and his daughter, Matilda. Beatrice married Godfrey, Duke of Lorraine, who was recognized by Henry IV. as her husband and as feudatory of the empire in the full place of Boniface. He died about 1070; and in this year Matilda was married by proxy to his son, Godfrey the Hunchback, whom, however, she did not see till the year 1072. The marriage was not a happy one; and the question has even been disputed among Matilda's biographers whether it was ever consummated. At any rate, it did not last long; for Godfrey was killed at Antwerp in 1076. In this year Matilda also lost her mother, Beatrice, who died at Pisa, and was buried in the cathedral.

By this rapid enumeration of events it will be seen how the power and honors of the house of Canossa, including Tuscany, Spoleto, and the fairest portions of Lombardy, had devolved upon a single woman of the age of thirty at the moment when the fierce quarrel between pope and emperor began in the year 1076. Matilda was destined to play a great, a striking, and a tragic part in the opening drama of Italian history. Her decided character and uncompromising course of action have won for her the name of "la gran donna d' Italia," and have caused her memory to be blessed or execrated, according as the temporal pretensions and spiritual tyranny of the papacy may have found supporters or opponents in posterity. She was reared from childhood in habits of austerity and unquestioning piety. Submission to the Church became for her not merely a rule of conduct, but a passionate en-

thusiasm. She identified herself with the cause of four successive popes, protected her idol, the terrible and iron-hearted Hildebrand, in the time of his adversity; remained faithful to his principles after his death; and having served the Holy See with all her force and all that she possessed through all her lifetime, she bequeathed her vast dominions to it on her death-bed. Like some of the greatest mediæval characters—like Hildebrand himself—Matilda was so thoroughly of one piece that she towers above the mists of ages with the massive grandeur of an incarnated idea. She is for us the living statue of a single thought, an undivided impulse, the more than woman born to represent her age. Nor was it without reason that Dante symbolized in her the love of Holy Church; though students of the *Purgatory* will hardly recognize the lovely maiden, singing and plucking flowers beside the stream of Lethe, in the stern and warlike chatelaine of Canossa. Unfortunately we know but little of Matilda's personal appearance. Her health was not strong; and it is said to have been weakened, especially in her last illness, by ascetic observances. Yet she headed her own troops, armed with sword and cuirass, avoiding neither peril nor fatigue in the quarrels of her master, Gregory. Up to the year 1622 two strong suits of mail were preserved at Quattro Castelli, which were said to have been worn by her in battle, and which were afterwards sold on the market-place at Reggio. This habit of donning armor does not, however, prove that Matilda was exceptionally vigorous; for in those savage times she could hardly have played the part of heroine without participating personally in the dangers of warfare.

No less monumental in the plastic unity of his character was the monk Hildebrand, who for twenty years before his elevation to the papacy had been the maker of popes and the creator of the policy of Rome. When he was himself elected in the year 1073, and had assumed the name of Gregory VII., he immediate-

ly began to put in practice the plans for Church aggrandizement he had slowly matured during the previous quarter of a century. To free the Church from its subservience to the Empire; to assert the Pope's right to ratify the election of the emperor and to exercise jurisdiction over him; to place ecclesiastical appointments in the sole power of the Roman See; and to render the celibacy of the clergy obligatory, were the points he had resolved to carry. Taken singly and together, these chief aims of Hildebrand's policy had but one object—the magnification of the Church at the expense both of the people and of secular authorities, and the further separation of the Church from the ties and sympathies of common life that bound it to humanity. To accuse Hildebrand of personal ambition would be but shallow criticism, though it is clear that his inflexible and puissant nature found a savage selfish pleasure in trampling upon power and humbling pride at warfare with his own. Yet his was in no sense an egotistic purpose, like that which moved the popes of the Renaissance to dismember Italy for their bastards. Hildebrand, like Matilda, was himself the creature of a great idea. These two potent personalities completely understood each other, and worked towards a single end. The mythopœic fancy might conceive of them as the male and female manifestations of one dominant faculty, the spirit of ecclesiastical dominion incarnate in a man and woman of almost superhuman mould.

Opposed to them, as the third actor in the drama of Canossa, was a man of feebler mould. Henry IV., King of Italy, but not yet crowned emperor, had none of his opponents' unity of purpose or monumental dignity of character. At war with his German feudatories, browbeaten by rebellious sons, unfaithful and cruel to his wife, vacillating in the measures he adopted to meet his divers difficulties, at one time tormented by his conscience into cowardly submission, and at another treasonably neglectful

of the most solemn obligations, Henry was no match for the stern wills against which he was destined to break in unavailing passion. Early disagreements with Gregory had culminated in his excommunication. The German nobles abandoned his cause; and Henry found it expedient to summon a council in Augsburg for the settlement of matters in dispute between the empire and the papacy. Gregory expressed his willingness to attend this council, and set forth from Rome accompanied by the Countess Matilda in December, 1076. He did not, however, travel farther than Vercelli, for news here reached him that Henry was about to enter Italy at the head of a powerful army. Matilda hereupon persuaded the Holy Father to place himself in safety among her strongholds of Canossa. Thither accordingly Gregory retired before the ending of that year; and bitter were the sarcasms uttered by the imperial partisans in Italy upon this protection offered by a fair countess to the monk who had been made a pope. The foul calumnies of that bygone age would be unworthy of even so much as this notice, if we did not trace in them the ineradicable Italian tendency to cynical insinuation—a tendency which has involved the history of the Renaissance popes in an almost impenetrable mist of lies and exaggerations.

Henry was in truth upon his road to Italy, but with a very different attendance from that which Gregory expected. Accompanied by Bertha, his wife, and his boy son Conrad, the emperor elect left Spire in the condition of a fugitive, crossed Burgundy, spent Christmas at Besançon, and journeyed to the foot of Mont Cenis. It is said that he was followed by a single male servant of mean birth; and if the tale of his adventures during the passage of the Alps can be credited, history presents fewer spectacles more picturesque than the straits to which this representative of the Cæsars, this supreme chief of feudal civility, this ruler destined still to be the leader of mighty armies and the father of a

line of monarchs, was exposed. Concealing his real name and state, he induced some shepherds to lead him and his escort through the thick snows to the summit of Mont Cenis; and by the help of these men the imperial party were afterwards let down the snow-slopes on the farther side by means of ropes. Bertha and her women were sewn up in hides and dragged across the frozen surface of the winter drifts. It was a year memorable for its severity. Heavy snow had fallen in October, which continued ice-bound and unyielding till the following April.

No sooner had Henry reached Turin than he set forward again in the direction of Canossa. The fame of his arrival preceded him, and he found that his party was far stronger in Italy than he had ventured to expect. Proximity to the Church of Rome divests its fulminations of half their terrors. The Italian bishops and barons, less superstitious than the Germans, and with greater reason to resent the domineering graspingness of Gregory, were ready to espouse the emperor's cause. Henry gathered a formidable force as he marched onward across Lombardy; and some of the most illustrious prelates and nobles of the South were in his suite. A more determined leader than Henry proved himself to be might possibly have forced Gregory to some accommodation, in spite of the strength of Canossa and the Pope's invincible obstinacy, by proper use of these supporters. Meanwhile the adherents of the Church were mustered in Matilda's fortress; among whom may be mentioned Azzo, the progenitor of Este and Brunswick; Hugo, Abbot of Clugny; and the princely family of Piedmont. "I am become a second Rome," exclaims Canossa, in the language of Matilda's rhyming chronicler; "all honors are mine; I hold at once both pope and king, the princes of Italy and those of Gaul, those of Rome, and those from far beyond the Alps." The stage was ready; the audience had assembled; and now the three great actors were about to meet. Immediately upon his ar-

rival at Canossa, Henry sent for his cousin, the Countess Matilda, and besought her to intercede for him with Gregory. He was prepared to make any concessions or to undergo any humiliations if only the ban of excommunication might be removed; nor, cowed as he was by his own superstitious conscience, and by the memory of the opposition he had met with from his German vassals, does he seem to have once thought of meeting force with force, and of returning to his Northern kingdom triumphant in the overthrow of Gregory's pride. Matilda undertook to plead his cause before the Pontiff. But Gregory was not to be moved so soon to mercy. "If Henry has in truth repented," he replied, "let him lay down crown and sceptre and declare himself unworthy of the name of king." The only point conceded to the suppliant was that he should be admitted in the garb of a penitent within the precincts of the castle. Leaving his retinue outside the walls, Henry entered the first series of outworks, and was thence conducted to the second, so that between him and the citadel itself there still remained the third of the surrounding bastions. Here he was bidden to wait the Pope's pleasure; and here, in the midst of that bitter winter weather, while the fierce winds of the Apennines were sweeping sleet upon him in their passage from Monte Pellegrino to the plain, he knelt barefoot, clothed in sackcloth, fasting from dawn till eve, for three whole days. On the morning of the fourth day, judging that Gregory was inexorable, and that his suit would not be granted, Henry retired to the Chapel of St. Nicholas, which stood within this second precinct. There he called to his aid the Abbot of Clugny and the countess, both of whom were his relations, and who, much as they might sympathize with Gregory, could hardly be supposed to look with satisfaction on their royal kinsman's outrage. The abbot told Henry that nothing in the world could move the Pope; but Matilda, when in turn he fell before her knees and wept, engaged to

do for him the utmost. She probably knew that the moment for unbending had arrived, and that her imperious guest could not with either decency or prudence prolong the outrage offered to the civil chief of Christendom. It was the 25th of January when the emperor elect was brought, half dead with cold and misery, into the Pope's presence. There he prostrated himself in the dust, crying aloud for pardon. It is said that Gregory first placed his foot upon Henry's neck, uttering these words of Scripture: "Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis, et conculcabis leonem et draconem," and that then he raised him from the earth and formally pronounced his pardon. The prelates and nobles who took part in this scene were compelled to guarantee with their own oaths the vows of obedience pronounced by Henry; so that in the very act of reconciliation a new insult was offered to him. After this Gregory said mass, and permitted Henry to communicate; and at the close of the day a banquet was served, at which the king sat down to meat with the Pope and the countess.

It is probable that, while Henry's penance was performed in the castle courts beneath the rock, his reception by the Pope, and all that subsequently happened, took place in the citadel itself. But of this we have no positive information. Indeed, the silence of the chronicles as to the topography of Canossa is peculiarly unfortunate for lovers of the picturesque in historic detail, now that there is no possibility of tracing the outlines of the ancient building. Had the author of the *Vita Mathildis* (Muratori, vol. v.) foreseen that his beloved Canossa would one day be nothing but a mass of native rock, he would undoubtedly have been more explicit on these points, and much that is vague about an event only paralleled by our Henry II.'s penance before Becket's shrine at Canterbury might now be clear.

Very little remains to be told about Canossa. During the

same year—1077—Matilda made the celebrated donation of her fiefs to Holy Church. This was accepted by Gregory in the name of St. Peter, and it was confirmed by a second deed during the pontificate of Urban IV., in 1102. Though Matilda subsequently married Guelfo d' Este, son of the Duke of Bavaria, she was speedily divorced from him; nor was there any heir to a marriage ridiculous by reason of disparity of age, the bridegroom being but eighteen, while the bride was forty-three in the year of her second nuptials. During one of Henry's descents into Italy, he made an unsuccessful attack upon Canossa, assailing it at the head of a considerable force one October morning in 1092. Matilda's biographer informs us that the mists of autumn veiled his beloved fortress from the eyes of the beleaguers. They had not even the satisfaction of beholding the unvanquished citadel; and, what was more, the banner of the emperor was seized and dedicated as a trophy in the Church of S. Apollonio. In the following year the countess opened her gates of Canossa to an illustrious fugitive, Adelaide, the wife of her old foe, Henry, who had escaped with difficulty from the insults and the cruelty of her husband. After Henry's death, his son, the Emperor Henry V., paid Matilda a visit in her castle of Bianello, addressed her by the name of mother, and conferred upon her the vice-regency of Liguria. At the age of sixty-nine she died, in 1115, at Bondeno de' Roncori, and was buried, not among her kinsmen at Canossa, but in an abbey of St. Benedict near Mantua. With her expired the main line of the noble house she represented; though Canossa, now made a fief of the empire in spite of Matilda's donation, was given to a family which claimed descent from Bonifazio's brother Conrad, a young man killed in the battle of Civoio. This family, in its turn, was extinguished in the year 1570; but a junior branch still exists at Verona. It will be remembered that Michel Angelo Buonarroti claimed kinship with

the Count of Canossa; and a letter from the count is extant acknowledging the validity of his pretension.

As far back as 1255 the people of Reggio destroyed the castle; nor did the nobles of Canossa distinguish themselves in subsequent history among those families who based their despotisms on the débris of the imperial power in Lombardy. It seemed destined that Canossa and all belonging to it should remain as a mere name and memory of the outgrown Middle Ages. Estensi, Carraresi, Visconti, Bentivogli, and Gonzaghi belong to a later period of Lombard history, and mark the dawn of the Renaissance.

As I lay and mused that afternoon of May upon the short grass, cropped by two gray goats whom a little boy was tending, it occurred to me to ask the woman who had served me as guide whether any legend remained in the country concerning the Countess Matilda. She had often, probably, been asked this question by other travellers. Therefore she was more than usually ready with an answer, which, as far as I could understand her dialect, was this: Matilda was a great and potent witch, whose summons the devil was bound to obey. One day she aspired, alone of all her sex, to say mass; but when the moment came for sacring the elements a thunderbolt fell from the clear sky and reduced her to ashes.* That the most single-hearted handmaid of the Holy Church, whose life was one long devotion to its ordinances, should survive in this grotesque myth, might serve to point a satire upon the vanity of earthly fame. The legend in its very extravagance is a fanciful distortion of the truth.

* I find that this story is common in the country round Canossa. It is mentioned by Professor A. Ferretti in his monograph entitled *Canossa, Studi e Ricerche* (Reggio, 1876), a work to which I am indebted, and which will repay careful study.

PARMA.

PARMA is perhaps the brightest *Residenzstadt* of the second class in Italy. Built on a sunny and fertile tract of the Lombard plain, within view of the Alps, and close beneath the shelter of the Apennines, it shines like a well-set gem with stately towers and cheerful squares in the midst of verdure. The cities of Lombardy are all like large country-houses: walking out of their gates, you seem to be stepping from a door or window that opens on a trim and beautiful garden, where mulberry-tree is married to mulberry by festoons of vines, and where the maize and sunflower stand together in rows between patches of flax and hemp. But it is not in order to survey the union of well-ordered husbandry with the civilities of ancient city-life that we break the journey at Parma between Milan and Bologna. We are attracted rather by the fame of one great painter, whose work, though it may be studied piecemeal in many galleries of Europe, in Parma has a fulness, largeness, and mastery that can nowhere else be found. In Parma alone Correggio challenges comparison with Raphael, with Tintoretto, with all the supreme decorative painters who have deigned to make their art the handmaid of architecture. Yet even in the cathedral and the church of St. Giovanni, where Correggio's frescos cover cupola and chapel wall, we could scarcely comprehend his greatness now—so cruelly have time and neglect dealt with those delicate dream-shadows of celestial fairy-land—were it not for an interpreter who consecrated a lifetime to the task of translating his master's poetry of fresco into the prose of engraving. That man was Paolo Toschi—a name to be ever

venerated by all lovers of the arts, since without his guidance we should hardly know what to seek for in the ruined splendors of the domes of Parma, or even, seeking, how to find the object of our search. Toschi's labor was more effectual than that of a restorer however skilful, more loving than that of a follower however faithful. He respected Correggio's handiwork with religious scrupulousness, adding not a line or tone or touch of color to the fading frescos; but he lived among them, aloft on scaffoldings, and face to face with the originals which he designed to reproduce. By long and close familiarity, by obstinate and patient interrogation, he divined Correggio's secret, and was able at last to see clearly through the mists of cobweb and mildew and altar smoke, and through the still more cruel travesty of so-called restoration. What he discovered he faithfully committed first to paper in water-colors, and then to copperplate with the burin; so that we enjoy the privilege of seeing Correggio's masterpieces as Toschi saw them, with the eyes of genius and of love and of long scientific study. It is not too much to say that some of Correggio's most charming compositions—for example, the dispute of St. Augustine and St. John—have been resuscitated from the grave by Toschi's skill. The original offers nothing but a mouldering surface from which the painter's work has dropped in scales. The engraving presents a design which we doubt not was Correggio's, for it corresponds in all particulars to the style and spirit of the master. To be critical in dealing with so successful an achievement of restoration and translation is difficult. Yet it may be admitted once and for all that Toschi has not unfrequently enfeebled his original. Under his touch Correggio loses somewhat of his sensuous audacity, his dithyrambic ecstacy, and approaches the ordinary standard of prettiness and graceful beauty. The Diana of the Camera di S. Paolo, for instance, has the strong calm splendor of a goddess: the same Diana in To-

schì's engraving seems about to smile with girlish joy. In a word, the engraver was a man of a more common stamp—more timid and more conventional than the painter. But this is after all a trifling deduction from the value of his work.

Our debt to Paolo Toschi is such that it would be ungrateful not to seek some details of his life. The few that can be gathered even at Parma are brief and bald enough. The newspaper articles and funeral panegyrics which refer to him are as barren as all such occasional notices in Italy have always been, the panegyrist seeming more anxious about his own style than eager to communicate information. Yet a bare outline of Toschi's biography may be supplied. He was born at Parma in 1788. His father was cashier of the post-office, and his mother's name was Anna Maria Brest. Early in his youth he studied painting at Parma under Biagio Martini; and in 1809 he went to Paris, where he learned the art of engraving from Bervic, and of etching from Oortman. In Paris he contracted an intimate friendship with the painter Gérard. But after ten years he returned to Parma, where he established a company and school of engravers in concert with his friend Antonio Isac. Maria Louisa, the then duchess, under whose patronage the arts flourished at Parma (witness Bodoni's exquisite typography), soon recognized his merit, and appointed him Director of the Ducal Academy. He then formed the project of engraving a series of the whole of Correggio's frescos. The undertaking was a vast one. Both the cupolas of St. John and the cathedral, together with the vault of the apse of St. Giovanni* and various portions of the side aisles, and the so-called Camera di S. Paolo, are covered by frescos of

* The fresco of the Coronation of the Virgin upon the semi-dome of St. Giovanni is the work of a copyist, Cesare Aretusi. But part of the original freseo, which was removed in 1684, exists in a good state of preservation at the end of the long gallery of the library.

Correggio and his pupil Parmegiano. These frescos have suffered so much from neglect and time, and from unintelligent restoration, that it is difficult in many cases to determine their true character. Yet Toschi did not content himself with selections, or shrink from the task of deciphering and engraving the whole. He formed a school of disciples, among whom were Carlo Raimondi of Milan, Antonio Costa of Venice, Edward Eichens of Berlin, Aloisio Juvara of Naples, Antonio Daleò, Giuseppe Magnani, and Lodovico Bisola of Parma, and employed them as assistants in his work. Death overtook him in 1854, before it was finished; and now the water-color drawings which are exhibited in the gallery of Parma prove to what extent the achievement fell short of his design. Enough, however, was accomplished to place the chief masterpieces of Correggio beyond the possibility of utter oblivion.

To the piety of his pupil Carlo Raimondi, the bearer of a name illustrious in the annals of engraving, we owe a striking portrait of Toschi. The master is represented on his seat upon the scaffold in the dizzy half-light of the dome. The shadowy forms of saints and angels are around him. He has raised his eyes from his cartoon to study one of these. In his right hand is the opera-glass with which he scrutinizes the details of distant groups. The upturned face, with its expression of contemplative intelligence, is like that of an astronomer accustomed to commerce with things above the sphere of common life, and ready to give account of all that he has gathered from his observation of a world not ours. In truth, the world created by Correggio and interpreted by Toschi is very far removed from that of actual existence. No painter has infused a more distinct individuality into his work, realizing by imaginative force and powerful projection an order of beauty peculiar to himself before which it is impossible to remain quite indifferent. We must

either admire the manner of Correggio or else shrink from it with the distaste which sensual art is apt to stir in natures of a severe or simple type.

What, then, is the Correggiosity of Correggio? In other words, what is the characteristic which, proceeding from the personality of the artist, is impressed on all his work? The answer to this question, though by no means simple, may, perhaps, be won by a process of gradual analysis. The first thing that strikes us in the art of Correggio is that he has aimed at the realistic representation of pure unrealities. His saints and angels are beings the like of whom we have hardly seen upon the earth. Yet they are displayed before us with all the movement and the vivid truth of nature. Next we feel that what constitutes the superhuman, visionary quality of these creatures is their uniform beauty of a merely sensuous type. They are all created for pleasure, not for thought or passion or activity or heroism. The uses of their brains, their limbs, their every feature, end in enjoyment; innocent and radiant wantonness is the condition of their whole existence. Correggio conceived the universe under the one mood of sensuous joy: his world was bathed in luxurious light; its inhabitants were capable of little beyond a soft voluptuousness. Over the domain of tragedy he had no sway, and very rarely did he attempt to enter on it: nothing, for example, can be feebler than his endeavor to express anguish in the distorted features of Madonna, St. John, and the Magdalen, who are bending over the dead body of a Christ extended in the attitude of languid repose. In like manner, he could not deal with subjects which demand a pregnancy of intellectual meaning. He paints the three Fates like young and joyous Bacchantes. Place rose-garlands and thyrsi in their hands instead of the distaff and the thread of human destinies, and they might figure appropriately upon the panels of a banquet-chamber in Pompeii. In this respect Correggio

might be termed the Rossini of painting. The melodies of the *Stabat Mater*—*Fac ut portem*, or *Quis est homo*—are the exact analogues in music of Correggio's voluptuous renderings of grave or mysterious motives. Nor, again, did he possess that severe and lofty art of composition which subordinates the fancy to the reason, and which seeks for the highest intellectual beauty in a kind of architectural harmony supreme above the melodies of gracefulness in detail. The Florentines and those who shared their spirit—Michael Angelo and Leonardo and Raphael—deriving this principle of design from the geometrical art of the Middle Ages, converted it to the noblest uses in their vast, well-ordered compositions. But Correggio ignored the laws of scientific construction. It was enough for him to produce a splendid and brilliant effect by the life and movement of his figures and by the intoxicating beauty of his forms. His type of beauty, too, is by no means elevated. Leonardo painted souls whereof the features and the limbs are but an index. The charm of Michael Angelo's ideal is like a flower upon a tree of rugged strength. Raphael aims at the loveliness which cannot be disjoined from goodness. But Correggio is contented with bodies "delicate and desirable." His angels are genii disimprisoned from the perfumed chalices of flowers, houris of an erotic paradise, elemental spirits of nature wantoning in Eden in her prime. To accuse the painter of conscious immorality, or of what is stigmatized as sensuality, would be as ridiculous as to class his seraphic beings among the products of the Christian imagination. They belong to the generation of the fauns. Like fauns, they combine a certain savage wildness, a dithyrambic ecstacy of inspiration, a delight in rapid movement as they revel amid clouds or flowers, with the permanent and all-pervading sweetness of the master's style. When infantine or childlike, these celestial sylphs are scarcely to be distinguished for any noble quality of beauty from Murillo's

cherubs, and are far less divine than the choir of children who attend Madonna in Titian's "Assumption." But in their boyhood and their prime of youth they acquire a fulness of sensuous vitality and a radiance that are peculiar to Correggio. The lily-bearer who helps to support St. Thomas beneath the dome of the cathedral at Parma, the groups of seraphs who crowd behind the Incoronata of St. Giovanni, and the two wild-eyed, open-mouthed St. Johns stationed at each side of the celestial throne are among the most splendid instances of the adolescent loveliness conceived by Correggio. Where the painter found their models may be questioned but not answered; for he has made them of a different fashion from the race of mortals: no court of Roman emperor or Turkish sultan, though stocked with the flowers of Bithynian and Circassian youth, have seen their like. Mozart's Cherubino seems to have sat for all of them. At any rate, they incarnate the very spirit of the songs he sings.

As a consequence of this predilection for sensuous and voluptuous forms, Correggio had no power of imagining grandly or severely. Satisfied with material realism in his treatment even of sublime mysteries, he converts the hosts of heaven into a "fricassee of frogs," according to the old epigram. His apostles, gazing after the Virgin who has left the earth, are thrown into attitudes so violent and so dramatically foreshortened that, seen from below upon the pavement of the cathedral, little of their form is distinguishable except legs and arms in vehement commotion. Very different is Titian's conception of this scene. To express the spiritual meaning, the emotion of Madonna's transit, with all the pomp which color and splendid composition can convey, is Titian's sole care; whereas Correggio appears to have been satisfied with realizing the tumult of heaven rushing to meet earth, and earth straining upward to ascend to heaven in violent commotion—a very orgasm of frenetic rapture. The essence of the event is forgot-

ten: its external manifestation alone is presented to the eye; and only the accessories of beardless angels and cloud-encumbered cherubs are really beautiful amid a surge of limbs in restless movement. More dignified, because designed with more repose, is the Apocalypse of St. John painted upon the cupola of St. Giovanni. The apostles throned on clouds, with which the dome is filled, gaze upward to one point. Their attitudes are noble; their form is heroic; in their eyes there is the strange ecstatic look by which Correggio interpreted his sense of supernatural vision: it is a gaze not of contemplation or deep thought, but of wild, half-savage joy, as if these saints also had become the elemental genii of cloud and air, spirits emergent from ether, the salamanders of an empyrean intolerable to mortal sense. The point on which their eyes converge, the culmination of their vision, is the figure of Christ. Here all the weakness of Correggio's method is revealed. He had undertaken to realize by no ideal allegorical suggestion, by no symbolism of architectural grouping, but by actual prosaic measurement, by corporeal form in subjection to the laws of perspective and foreshortening, things which in their very essence admit of only a figurative revelation. Therefore his Christ, the centre of all those earnest eyes, is contracted to a shape in which humanity itself is mean, a sprawling figure which irresistibly reminds one of a frog. The clouds on which the saints repose are opaque and solid; cherubs in countless multitudes, a swarm of merry children, crawl about upon these feather-beds of vapor, creep between the legs of the apostles, and play at bopeep behind their shoulders. There is no propriety in their appearance there. They take no interest in the beatific vision. They play no part in the celestial symphony; nor are they capable of more than merely infantine enjoyment. Correggio has sprinkled them lavishly like living flowers about his cloud-land, because he could not sustain a grave and

solemn strain of music, but was forced by his temperament to overlay the melody with roulades. Gazing at these frescos, the thought came to me that Correggio was like a man listening to sweetest flute-playing, and translating phrase after phrase as they passed through his fancy into laughing faces, breezy tresses, and rolling mists. Sometimes a grander cadence reached his ear; and then St. Peter with the keys, or St. Augustine of the mighty brow, or the inspired eyes of St. John, took form beneath his pencil. But the light airs returned, and rose and lily faces bloomed again for him among the clouds. It is not therefore in dignity or sublimity that Correggio excels, but in artless grace and melodious tenderness. The Madonna della Scala clasping her baby with a caress which the little child returns, St. Catherine leaning in a rapture of ecstatic love to wed the infant Christ, St. Sebastian in the bloom of almost boyish beauty, are the so-called sacred subjects to which the painter was adequate, and which he has treated with the voluptuous tenderness we find in his pictures of Leda and Danae and Io. Could these saints and martyrs descend from Correggio's canvas, and take flesh, and breathe, and begin to live; of what high action, of what grave passion, of what exemplary conduct in any walk of life would they be capable? That is the question which they irresistibly suggest; and we are forced to answer, None! The moral and religious world did not exist for Correggio. His art was but a way of seeing carnal beauty in a dream that had no true relation to reality.

Correggio's sensibility to light and color was exactly on a par with his feeling for form. He belongs to the poets of chiaroscuro and the poets of coloring; but in both regions he maintains the individuality so strongly expressed in his choice of purely sensuous beauty. Tintoretto makes use of light and shade for investing his great compositions with dramatic intensity. Rembrandt interprets sombre and fantastic moods of the mind by gold-

en gloom and silvery irradiation, translating thought into the language of penumbral mystery. Leonardo studies the laws of light scientifically, so that the proper roundness and effect of distance should be accurately rendered, and all the subtleties of nature's smiles be mimicked. Correggio is content with fixing on his canvas the ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα, the many-twinkling laughter of light in motion, rained down through fleecy clouds or trembling foliage, melting into half-shadows, bathing and illuminating every object with a soft caress. There are no tragic contrasts of splendor sharply defined on blackness, no mysteries of half-felt and pervasive twilight, no studied accuracies of noonday clearness in his work. Light and shadow are woven together on his figures like an impalpable Coan gauze, aerial and transparent, enhancing the palpitations of voluptuous movement which he loved. His coloring, in like manner, has none of the superb and mundane pomp which the Venetians affected: it does not glow or burn or beat the fire of gems into our brain; joyous and wanton, it seems to be exactly such a beauty-bloom as sense requires for its satiety. There is nothing in his hues to provoke deep passion or to stimulate the yearnings of the soul: the pure blushes of the dawn and the crimson pyres of sunset are nowhere in the world that he has painted. But that chord of joyous color which may fitly be married to the smiles of light, the blues which are found in laughing eyes, the pinks that tinge the cheeks of early youth, and the warm yet silvery tones of healthy flesh, mingle as in a marvellous pearl-shell on his pictures. Both chiaroscuro and coloring have this supreme purpose in art, to affect the sense like music, and like music to create a mood in the soul of the spectator. Now the mood which Correggio stimulates is one of natural and thoughtless pleasure. To feel his influence and at the same moment to be the subject of strong passion, or fierce lust, or heroic resolve, or profound contemplation, or pensive melancholy, is impossible.

Wantonness, innocent because unconscious of sin, immoral because incapable of any serious purpose, is the quality which prevails in all that he has painted. The pantomimes of a Mohammedan paradise might be put upon the stage after patterns supplied by this least spiritual of painters.

It follows from this analysis that the Correggiosity of Correggio, that which sharply distinguished him from all previous artists, was the faculty of painting a purely voluptuous dream of beautiful beings in perpetual movement, beneath the laughter of morning light, in a world of never-failing April hues. When he attempts to depart from the fairy-land of which he was the Prospero, and to match himself with the masters of sublime thought or earnest passion, he proves his weakness. But within his own magic circle he reigns supreme, no other artist having blended the witcheries of coloring, chiaroscuro, and faunlike loveliness of form into a harmony so perfect in its sensuous charm. Bewitched by the strains of the siren, we pardon affectations of expression, emptiness of meaning, feebleness of composition, exaggerated and melodramatic attitudes. There is what Goethe calls a dæmonic influence in the art of Correggio: "in poetry," said Goethe to Eckermann, "especially in that which is unconscious, before which reason and understanding fall short, and which therefore produces effects so far surpassing all conception, there is always something dæmonic." It is not to be wondered that Correggio, possessed of this dæmonic power in the highest degree, and working to a purely sensuous end, should have exercised a fatal influence over art. His successors, attracted by an intoxicating loveliness which they could not analyze, which had nothing in common with the reason or the understanding, but was like a glamour cast upon the soul in its most secret sensibilities, threw themselves blindly into the imitation of Correggio's faults. His affectation, his want of earnest thought, his neglect

of composition, his sensuous realism, his all-pervading sweetness, his infantine prettiness, his substitution of thaumaturgical effects for conscientious labor, admitted only too easy imitation, and were but too congenial with the spirit of the late Renaissance. Cupolas through the length and breadth of Italy began to be covered with clouds and simpering cherubs in the convulsions of artificial ecstacy. The attenuated elegance of Parmigiano, the attitudinizing of Anselmi's saints and angels, and a general sacrifice of what is solid and enduring to sentimental gewgaws on the part of all painters who had submitted to the magic of Correggio, proved how easy it was to go astray with the great master. Meanwhile no one could approach him in that which was truly his own—the delineation of a transient moment in the life of sensuous beauty, the painting of a smile on Nature's face, when light and color tremble in harmony with the movement of joyous living creatures. Another dæmonic nature of a far more powerful type contributed his share to the ruin of art in Italy. Michael Angelo's constrained attitudes and muscular anatomy were imitated by painters and sculptors, who thought that the grand style lay in the presentation of theatrical athletes, but who could not seize the secret whereby the great master made even the bodies of men and women—colossal trunks and writhen limbs—interpret the meanings of his deep and melancholy soul.

It is a sad law of progress in art that when the æsthetic impulse is on the wane, artists should perforce select to follow the weakness rather than the vigor of their predecessors. While painting was in the ascendant, Raphael could take the best of Perugino and discard the worst; in its decadence Parmigiano reproduces the affectations of Correggio, and Bernini carries the exaggerations of Michael Angelo to absurdity. All arts describe a parabola. The force which produces them causes them to rise throughout their growth up to a certain point, and then to de-

scend more gradually in a long and slanting line of regular de-
clension. There is no real break of continuity. The end is the
result of simple exhaustion. Thus the last of our Elizabethan
dramatists, Shirley and Crowne and Killigrew, pushed to its ulti-
mate conclusion the principle inherent in Marlowe, not attempt-
ing to break new ground, nor imitating the excellences so much
as the defects of their forerunners. Thus, too, the Pointed style
of architecture in England gave birth first to what is called the
Decorated, next to the Perpendicular, and finally expired in the
Tudor. Each step was a step of progress—at first for the better,
at last for the worse—but logical, continuous, necessitated.*

It is difficult to leave Correggio without at least posing the
question of the difference between moralized and merely sensual
art. Is all art excellent in itself and good in its effect that is
beautiful and earnest? There is no doubt that Correggio's work
is in a way most beautiful; and it bears unmistakable signs of
the master having given himself with single-hearted devotion to
the expression of that phase of loveliness which he could appre-
hend. In so far we must admit that his art is both excellent and
solid. Yet we are unable to conceive that any human being could
be made better—stronger for endurance, more fitted for the uses
of the world, more sensitive to what is noble in nature—by its
contemplation. At the best, Correggio does but please us in our
lighter moments, and we are apt to feel that the pleasure he has
given is of an enervating kind. To expect obvious morality of
any artist is confessedly absurd. It is not the artist's province to
preach, or even to teach, except by remote suggestion. Yet the
mind of the artist may be highly moralized, and then he takes
rank not merely with the ministers to refined pleasure, but also
with the educators of the world. He may, for example, be pene-

* See the chapter on "Greek Tragedy and Euripides" in my *Greek Poets*,
vol. ii., for a further development of this view of artistic evolution.

trated with a just sense of humanity like Shakespeare, or with a sublime temperance like Sophocles, instinct with prophetic intuition like Michael Angelo, or with passionate experience like Beethoven. The mere sight of the work of Pheidias is like breathing pure health-giving air. Milton and Dante were steeped in religious patriotism; Goethe was pervaded with philosophy, and Balzac with scientific curiosity. Ariosto, Cervantes, and even Boccaccio are masters in the mysteries of common life. In all these cases the tone of the artist's mind is felt throughout his work: what he paints or sings or writes conveys a lesson while it pleases. On the other hand, depravity in an artist or a poet percolates through work which has in it nothing positive of evil, and a very miasma of poisonous influence may rise from the apparently innocuous creations of a tainted soul. Now Correggio is moralized in neither way—neither as a good or as a bad man, neither as an acute thinker nor as a deliberate voluptuary. He is simply sensuous. On his own ground he is even very fresh and healthy: his delineation of youthful maternity, for example, is as true as it is beautiful; and his sympathy with the gleefulness of children is devoid of affectation. We have then only to ask ourselves whether the defect in him of all thought and feeling which is not at once capable of graceful fleshly incarnation, be sufficient to lower him in the scale of artists. This question must of course be answered according to our definition of the purposes of art. There is no doubt that the most highly organized art—that which absorbs the most numerous human qualities and effects a harmony between the most complex elements—is the noblest. Therefore the artist who combines moral elevation and power of thought with a due appreciation of sensual beauty is more elevated and more beneficial than one whose domain is simply that of carnal loveliness. Correggio, if this be so, must take a comparatively low rank. Just as we welcome the beautiful ath-

lete for the radiant life that is in him, but bow before the personality of Sophocles, whose perfect form enshrined a noble and highly educated soul, so we gratefully accept Correggio for his grace, while we approach the consummate art of Michael Angelo with reverent awe. It is necessary in æsthetics, as elsewhere, to recognize a hierarchy of excellence, the grades of which are determined by the greater or less comprehensiveness of the artist's nature expressed in his work. At the same time, the calibre of the artist's genius must be estimated; for eminent greatness, even of a narrow kind, will always command our admiration; and the amount of his originality has also to be taken into account. What is unique has, for that reason alone, a claim on our consideration. Judged in this way, Correggio deserves a place, say, in the sweet planet Venus, above the moon and above Mercury, among the artists who have not advanced beyond the contemplations which find their proper outcome in love. Yet, even thus, he aids the culture of humanity. "We should take care," said Goethe, apropos of Byron, to Eckermann, "not to be always looking for culture in the decidedly pure and moral. Everything that is great promotes cultivation as soon as we are aware of it."

FORNOVO.

IN the town of Parma there is one surpassingly strange relic of the past. The palace of the Farnesi, like many a haunt of upstart tyranny and beggared pride on these Italian plains, rises misshapen and disconsolate above the stream that bears the city's name. The squalor of this gray-brown edifice of formless brick, left naked like the palace of the same Farnesi at Piacenza, has something even horrid in it now that only vague memory survives of its former uses. The princely *sprezzatura* of its ancient occupants, careless of these unfinished courts and unroofed galleries amid the splendor of their purpled silks and the glitter of their torchlight pageantry, has yielded to sullen cynicism—the cynicism of arrested ruin and unreverend age. All that was satisfying to the senses and distracting to the eyesight in their transitory pomp has passed away, leaving a sinister and naked shell. Remembrance can but summon up the crimes, the madness, the trivialities of those dead palace-builders. An atmosphere of evil clings to the dilapidated walls, as though the tainted spirit of the infamous Pier Luigi still possessed the spot, on which his toadstool brood of princelings sprouted in the mud of their misdeeds. Enclosed in this huge labyrinth of brickwork is the relic of which I spoke. It is the once world-famous Teatro Farnese, raised in the year 1618 by Ranunzio Farnese for the marriage of Odoardo Farnese with Margaret of Austria. Giambattista Aleotti, a native of pageant-loving Ferrara, traced the stately curves and noble orders of the galleries, designed the columns that support the raftered roof, marked out the orchestra, arranged the stage, and breathed into

the whole the spirit of Palladio's most heroic neo-Latin style. Vast, built of wood, dishevelled, with broken statues and blurred coats-of-arms, with its empty scene, its uncurling frescos, its hangings all in rags, its cobwebs of two centuries, its dust and mildew and discolored gold—this theatre, a sham in its best days, and now that ugliest of things, a sham unmasked and naked to the light of day, is yet sublime, because of its proportioned harmony, because of its grand Roman manner. The sight and feeling of it fasten upon the mind and abide in the memory like a nightmare—like one of Piranesi's weirdest and most passion-haunted etchings for the *Carceri*. Idling there at noon in the twilight of the dust-bedarkened windows, we fill the tiers of those high galleries with ladies, the space below with grooms and pages; the stage is ablaze with torches, and an Italian Masque, such as our Marlowe dreamed of, fills the scene. But it is impossible to dower these fancies with even such life as in healthier, happier ruins phantasy may lend to imagination's figments. This theatre is like a maniac's skull, empty of all but unrealities and mockeries of things that are. The ghosts we raise here could never have been living men and women: *questi sciaurati non fur mai vivi*. So clinging is the sense of instability that appertains to every fragment of that dry-rot tyranny which seized by evil fortune in the sunset of her golden day on Italy.

In this theatre I mused one morning after visiting Fornovo; and the thoughts suggested by the battle-field found their proper atmosphere in the dilapidated place. What, indeed, is the Teatro Farnese but a symbol of those hollow principalities which the despot and the stranger built in Italy after the fatal date of 1494, when national enthusiasm and political energy were expiring in a blaze of art, and when the Italians as a people had ceased to be; but when the phantom of their former life, surviving in high works of beauty, was still superb by reason of imperishable style!

How much in Italy of the Renaissance was, like this plank-built, plastered theatre, a glorious sham! The sham was seen through then; and now it stands unmasked: and yet, strange to say, so perfect is its form that we respect the sham and yield our spirits to the incantation of its music.

The battle of Fornovo, as modern battles go, was a paltry affair; and even at the time it seemed sufficiently without result. Yet the trumpets which rang on July 6th, 1495, for the onset, sounded the *réveille* of the modern world; and in the inconclusive termination of the struggle of that day the Italians were already judged and sentenced as a nation. The armies who met that morning represented Italy and France—Italy, the Sibyl of Renaissance; France, the Sibyl of Revolution. At the fall of evening Europe was already looking northward; and the last years of the fifteenth century were opening an act which closed in blood at Paris on the ending of the eighteenth.

If it were not for thoughts like these, no one, I suppose, would take the trouble to drive for two hours out of Parma to the little village of Fornovo—a score of bare gray hovels on the margin of a pebbly river-bed beneath the Apennines. The fields on either side, as far as eye can see, are beautiful indeed in May sunlight, painted here with flax, like shallow sheets of water reflecting a pale sky, and there with clover red as blood. Scarce unfolded leaves sparkle like flamelets of bright green upon the knotted vines, and the young corn is bending all one way beneath a western breeze. But not less beautiful than this is the whole broad plain of Lombardy; nor are the nightingales louder here than in the acacia-trees around Pavia. As we drive, the fields become less fertile, and the hills encroach upon the level, sending down their spurs upon that waveless plain like blunt rocks jutting out into a tranquil sea. When we reach the bed of the Taro, these hills begin to narrow on either hand, and the road rises. Soon

they open out again with gradual curving lines, forming a kind of amphitheatre filled up from flank to flank with the *ghiara*, or pebbly bottom, of the Taro. The Taro is not less wasteful than any other of the brotherhood of streams that pour from Alp or Apennine to swell the Po. It wanders, an impatient rivulet, through a wilderness of boulders, uncertain of its aim, shifting its course with the season of the year, unless the jaws of some deep-cloven gully hold it tight and show how insignificant it is. As we advance, the hills approach again; between their skirts there is nothing but the river-bed; and now on rising ground above the stream, at the point of juncture between the Ceno and the Taro, we find Fornovo. Beyond the village the valley broadens out once more, disclosing Apennines capped with winter snow. To the right descends the Ceno. To the left foams the Taro, following whose rocky channel we should come at last to Pontremoli and the Tyrrhenian Sea beside Sarzana. On a May-day of sunshine like the present, the Taro is a gentle stream. A wagon drawn by two white oxen has just entered its channel, guided by a contadino with goat-skin leggings, wielding a long goad. The patient creatures stem the water, which rises to the peasant's thighs and ripples round the creaking wheels. Swaying to and fro, as the shingles shift upon the river-bed, they make their way across; and now they have emerged upon the stones; and now we lose them in a flood of sunlight.

It was by this pass that Charles VIII. in 1495 returned from Tuscany, when the army of the League was drawn up waiting to intercept and crush him in the mouse-trap of Fornovo. No road remained for Charles and his troops but the rocky bed of the Taro, running as I have described it between the spurs of steep hills. It is true that the valley of the Baganza leads, from a little higher up among the mountains, into Lombardy. But this pass runs straight to Parma; and to follow it would have brought the

French upon the walls of a strong city. Charles could not do otherwise than descend upon the village of Fornovo, and cut his way thence in the teeth of the Italian army over stream and boulder between the gorges of throttling mountain. The failure of the Italians to achieve what here upon the ground appears so simple delivered Italy hand-bound to strangers. Had they but succeeded in arresting Charles and destroying his forces at Fornovo, it is just possible that then—even then, at the eleventh hour—I Italy might have gained the sense of national coherence, or at least have proved herself capable of holding by her leagues the foreigner at bay. As it was, the battle of Fornovo, in spite of Venetian bonfires and Mantuan Madonnas of Victory, made her conscious of incompetence and convicted her of cowardice. After Fornovo, her sons scarcely dared to hold their heads up in the field against invaders; and the battles fought upon her soil were duels among aliens for the prize of Italy.

In order to comprehend the battle of Fornovo in its bearings on Italian history, we must go back to the year 1492, and understand the conditions of the various states of Italy at that date. On April 8th in that year, Lorenzo de' Medici, who had succeeded in maintaining a political equilibrium in the peninsula, expired, and was succeeded by his son Piero, a vain and foolhardy young man, from whom no guidance could be expected. On July 25th, Innocent VIII. died, and was succeeded by the very worst pope who has ever occupied St. Peter's chair, Roderigo Borgia, Alexander VI. It was felt at once that the old order of things had somehow ended, and that a new era, the destinies of which as yet remained incalculable, was opening for Italy. The chief Italian powers, hitherto kept in equipoise by the diplomacy of Lorenzo de' Medici, were these—the Duchy of Milan, the Republic of Venice, the Republic of Florence, the Papacy, and the Kingdom of Naples. Minor states, such as the republics of Genoa and Siena,

the duchies of Urbino and Ferrara, the marquisate of Mantua, the petty tyrannies of Romagna, and the wealthy city of Bologna, were sufficiently important to affect the balance of power, and to produce new combinations. For the present purpose it is, however, enough to consider the five great powers.

After the peace of Constance, which freed the Lombard Communes from imperial interference in the year 1183, Milan, by her geographical position, rose rapidly to be the first city of North Italy. Without narrating the changes by which she lost her freedom as a Commune, it is enough to state that, earliest of all Italian cities, Milan passed into the hands of a single family. The Visconti managed to convert this flourishing commonwealth, with all its dependencies, into their private property, ruling it exclusively for their own profit, using its municipal institutions as the machinery of administration, and employing the taxes which they raised upon its wealth for purely selfish ends. When the line of the Visconti ended, in the year 1447, their tyranny was continued by Francesco Sforza, the son of a poor soldier of adventure, who had raised himself by his military genius, and had married Bianca, the illegitimate daughter of the last Visconti. On the death of Francesco Sforza, in 1466, he left two sons, Galeazzo Maria and Lodovico, surnamed *Il Moro*, both of whom were destined to play a prominent part in history. Galeazzo Maria, dissolute, vicious, and cruel to the core, was murdered by his injured subjects in the year 1476. His son, Giovanni Galeazzo, aged eight, would in course of time have succeeded to the duchy, had it not been for the ambition of his uncle Lodovico. Lodovico contrived to name himself as regent for his nephew, whom he kept, long after he had come of age, in a kind of honorable prison. Virtual master in Milan, but without a legal title to the throne, unrecognized in his authority by the Italian powers, and holding it from day to day by craft and fraud, Lodovico at last found his situation un-

tenable; and it was this difficulty of a usurper to maintain himself in his despotism which, as we shall see, brought the French into Italy.

Venice, the neighbor and constant foe of Milan, had become a close oligarchy by a process of gradual constitutional development, which threw her government into the hands of a few nobles. She was practically ruled by the hereditary members of the Grand Council. Ever since the year 1453, when Constantinople fell beneath the Turk, the Venetians had been more and more straitened in their Oriental commerce, and were thrown back upon the policy of territorial aggrandizement in Italy, from which they had hitherto refrained as alien to the temperament of the republic. At the end of the fifteenth century Venice, therefore, became an object of envy and terror to the Italian States. They envied her because she alone was tranquil, wealthy, powerful, and free. They feared her because they had good reason to suspect her of encroachment; and it was foreseen that if she got the upperhand in Italy, all Italy would be the property of the families inscribed upon the Golden Book. It was thus alone that the Italians comprehended government. The principle of representation being utterly unknown, and the privileged burghers in each city being regarded as absolute and lawful owners of the city and of everything belonging to it, the conquest of a town by a republic implied the political extinction of that town and the disfranchisement of its inhabitants in favor of the conquerors.

Florence at this epoch still called itself a republic; and of all Italian commonwealths it was by far the most democratic. Its history, unlike that of Venice, had been the history of continual and brusque changes, resulting in the destruction of the old nobility, in the equalization of the burghers, and in the formation of a new aristocracy of wealth. From this class of *bourgeois* nobles sprang the Medici, who, by careful manipulation of the State

machinery, by the creation of a powerful party devoted to their interests, by flattery of the people, by corruption, by taxation, and by constant scheming, raised themselves to the first place in the commonwealth, and became its virtual masters. In the year 1492, Lorenzo de' Medici, the most remarkable chief of this despotic family, died, bequeathing his supremacy in the republic to a son of marked incompetence.

Since the pontificate of Nicholas V. the See of Rome had entered upon a new period of existence. The popes no longer dreaded to reside in Rome, but were bent upon making the metropolis of Christendom both splendid as a seat of art and learning, and also potent as the capital of a secular kingdom. Though their fiefs in Romagna and the March were still held but loosely, though their provinces swarmed with petty despots who defied the papal authority, and though the princely Roman houses of Colonna and Orsini were still strong enough to terrorize the Holy Father in the Vatican, it was now clear that the Papal See must in the end get the better of its adversaries, and consolidate itself into a first-rate power. The internal spirit of the papacy, at this time, corresponded to its external policy. It was thoroughly secularized by a series of worldly and vicious pontiffs, who had clean forgotten what their title, Vicar of Christ, implied. They consistently used their religious prestige to enforce their secular authority, while by their temporal power they caused their religious claims to be respected. Corrupt and shameless, they indulged themselves in every vice, openly acknowledged their children, and turned Italy upside down in order to establish favorites and bastards in the principalities they seized as spoils of war.

The kingdom of Naples differed from any other state of Italy. Subject continually to foreign rulers since the decay of the Greek Empire, governed in succession by the Normans, the Hohenstauffens, and the House of Anjou, it had never enjoyed the real inde-

pendence or the free institutions of the northern provinces; nor had it been Italianized in the same sense as the rest of the peninsula. Despotism, which assumed so many forms in Italy, was here neither the tyranny of a noble house, nor the masked autocracy of a burgher, nor yet the forceful sway of a condottiere. It had a dynastic character, resembling the monarchy of one of the great European nations, but modified by the peculiar conditions of Italian state-craft. Owing to this dynastic and monarchical complexion of the Neapolitan kingdom, semi-feudal customs flourished in the south far more than in the north of Italy. The barons were more powerful; and the destinies of the Regno often turned upon their feuds and quarrels with the crown. At the same time the Neapolitan despots shared the uneasy circumstances of all Italian potentates, owing to the uncertainty of their tenure, both as conquerors and aliens, and also as the nominal vassals of the Holy See. The rights of suzerainty which the Normans had yielded to the papacy over their Southern conquests, and which the popes had arbitrarily exercised in favor of the Angevine princes, proved a constant source of peril to the rest of Italy by rendering the succession to the crown of Naples doubtful. On the extinction of the Angevine line, however, the throne was occupied by a prince who had no valid title but that of the sword to its possession. Alfonso of Aragon conquered Naples in 1442, and neglecting his hereditary dominion, settled in his Italian capital. Possessed with the enthusiasm for literature which was then the ruling passion of the Italians, and very liberal to men of learning, Alfonso won for himself the surname of Magnanimous. On his death, in 1458, he bequeathed his Spanish kingdom, together with Sicily and Sardinia, to his brother, and left the fruits of his Italian conquest to his bastard, Ferdinand. This Ferdinand, whose birth was buried in profound obscurity, was the reigning sovereign in the year 1492. Of a cruel and sombre temperament,

traitorous and tyrannical, Ferdinand was hated by his subjects as much as Alfonso had been loved. He possessed, however, to a remarkable degree, the qualities which at that epoch constituted a consummate statesman; and though the history of his reign is the history of plots and conspiracies, of judicial murders and forcible assassinations, of famines produced by iniquitous taxation, and of every kind of diabolical tyranny, Ferdinand contrived to hold his own, in the teeth of a rebellious baronage or a maddened population. His political sagacity amounted almost to a prophetic instinct in the last years of his life, when he became aware that the old order was breaking up in Italy, and had cause to dread that Charles VIII. of France would prove his title to the kingdom of Naples by force of arms.*

Such were the component parts of the Italian body politic, with the addition of numerous petty principalities and powers, adhering more or less consistently to one or other of the greater states. The whole complex machine was bound together by no sense of common interest, animated by no common purpose, amenable to no central authority. Even such community of feeling as one spoken language gives was lacking. And yet Italy distinguished herself clearly from the rest of Europe, not merely as a geographical fact, but also as a people intellectually and spiritually one. The rapid rise of humanism had aided in producing this national self-consciousness. Every state and every city was absorbed in the recovery of culture and in the development of art and literature. Far in advance of the other European nations, the Italians regarded the rest of the world as barbarous, priding themselves the while, in spite of mutual jealousies and hatreds, on their Italic civilization. They were enormously wealthy. The resources of the papal treasury, the private fortunes of the Florentine bank-

* Charles claimed under the will of René of Anjou, who in turn claimed under the will of Joan II.

ers, the riches of the Venetian merchants might have purchased all that France or Germany possessed of value. The single duchy of Milan yielded to its masters seven hundred thousand golden florins of revenue, according to the computation of De Comines. In default of a confederative system, the several states were held in equilibrium by diplomacy. By far the most important people, next to the despots and the captains of adventure, were ambassadors and orators. War itself had become a matter of arrangement, bargain, and diplomacy. The game of stratagem was played by generals who had been friends yesterday and might be friends again to-morrow, with troops who felt no loyalty whatever for the standards under which they listed. To avoid slaughter and to achieve the ends of warfare by parade and demonstration was the interest of every one concerned. Looking back upon Italy of the fifteenth century, taking account of her religious deadness and moral corruption, estimating the absence of political vigor in the republics and the noxious tyranny of the despots, analyzing her lack of national spirit, and comparing her splendid life of cultivated ease with the want of martial energy, we can see but too plainly that contact with a simpler and stronger people could not but produce a terrible catastrophe. The Italians themselves, however, were far from comprehending this. Centuries of undisturbed internal intrigue had accustomed them to play the game of forfeits with each other, and nothing warned them that the time was come at which diplomacy, finesse, and craft would stand them in ill stead against rapacious conquerors.

The storm which began to gather over Italy in the year 1492 had its first beginning in the North. Lodovico Sforza's position in the Duchy of Milan was becoming every day more difficult, when a slight and to all appearances insignificant incident converted his apprehension of danger into panic. It was customary for the states of Italy to congratulate a new pope on his election

by their ambassadors; and this ceremony had now to be performed for Roderigo Borgia. Lodovico proposed that his envoys should go to Rome together with those of Venice, Naples, and Florence; but Piero de' Medici, whose vanity made him wish to send an embassy in his own name, contrived that Lodovico's proposal should be rejected both by Florence and the King of Naples. So strained was the situation of Italian affairs that Lodovico saw in this repulse a menace to his own usurped authority. Feeling himself isolated among the princes of his country, rebuffed by the Medici, and coldly treated by the King of Naples, he turned in his anxiety to France, and advised the young king, Charles VIII., to make good his claim upon the Regno. It was a bold move to bring the foreigner thus into Italy; and even Lodovico, who prided himself upon his sagacity, could not see how things would end. He thought his situation so hazardous, however, that any change must be for the better. Moreover, a French invasion of Naples would tie the hands of his natural foe, King Ferdinand, whose granddaughter, Isabella of Aragon, had married Giovanni Galeazzo Sforza, and was now the rightful Duchess of Milan. When the Florentine ambassador at Milan asked him how he had the courage to expose Italy to such peril, his reply betrayed the egotism of his policy: "You talk to me of Italy; but when have I looked Italy in the face? No one ever gave a thought to my affairs. I have, therefore, had to give them such security as I could."

Charles VIII. was young, light-brained, romantic, and ruled by *parvenus* who had an interest in disturbing the old order of the monarchy. He lent a willing ear to Lodovico's invitation, backed as this was by the eloquence and passion of numerous Italian refugees and exiles. Against the advice of his more prudent counsellors, he taxed all the resources of his kingdom, and concluded treaties on disadvantageous terms with England, Germany, and

Spain, in order that he might be able to concentrate all his attention upon the Italian expedition. At the end of the year 1493, it was known that the invasion was resolved upon. Gentile Becchi, the Florentine envoy at the Court of France, wrote to Piero de' Medici: "If the king succeeds, it is all over with Italy — *tutta a bordello*." The extraordinary selfishness of the several Italian states at this critical moment deserves to be noticed. The Venetians, as Paolo Antonio Soderini described them to Piero de' Medici, "are of opinion that to keep quiet, and to see other potentates of Italy spending and suffering, cannot but be to their advantage. They trust no one, and feel sure they have enough money to be able at any moment to raise sufficient troops, and so to guide events according to their inclinations." As the invasion was directed against Naples, Ferdinand of Aragon displayed the acutest sense of the situation. "Frenchmen," he exclaimed, in what appears like a prophetic passion when contrasted with the cold indifference of others no less really menaced, "have never come into Italy without inflicting ruin; and this invasion, if rightly considered, cannot but bring universal ruin, although it seems to menace us alone." In his agony Ferdinand applied to Alexander VI. But the Pope looked coldly upon him, because the King of Naples, with rare perspicacity, had predicted that his elevation to the papacy would prove disastrous to Christendom. Alexander preferred to ally himself with Venice and Milan. Upon this Ferdinand wrote as follows: "It seems fated that the popes should leave no peace in Italy. We are compelled to fight; but the Duke of Bari (*i. e.*, Lodovico Sforza) should think what may ensue from the tumult he is stirring up. He who raises this wind will not be able to lay the tempest when he likes. Let him look to the past, and he will see how every time that our internal quarrels have brought powers from beyond the Alps into Italy, these have oppressed and lorded over her."

Terribly verified as these words were destined to be—and they were no less prophetic in their political sagacity than Savonarola's prediction of the Sword and bloody Scourge—it was now too late to avert the coming ruin. On March 1, 1494, Charles was with his army at Lyons. Early in September he had crossed the pass of Mont Genève and taken up his quarters in the town of Asti. There is no need to describe in detail the holiday march of the French troops through Lombardy, Tuscany, and Rome, until, without having struck a blow of consequence, the gates of Naples opened to receive the conqueror upon February 22, 1495. Philippe de Comines, who parted from the king at Asti and passed the winter as his envoy at Venice, has more than once recorded his belief that nothing but the direct interposition of Providence could have brought so mad an expedition to so successful a conclusion. “*Dieu monstroit conduire l'entreprise.*” No sooner, however, was Charles installed in Naples than the states of Italy began to combine against him. Lodovico Sforza had availed himself of the general confusion consequent upon the first appearance of the French, to poison his nephew. He was, therefore, now the titular, as well as virtual, Lord of Milan. So far, he had achieved what he desired, and had no further need of Charles. The overtures he now made to the Venetians and the Pope terminated in a league between these powers for the expulsion of the French from Italy. Germany and Spain entered into the same alliance; and De Comines, finding himself treated with marked coldness by the Signory of Venice, despatched a courier to warn Charles in Naples of the coming danger. After a stay of only fifty days in his new capital, the French king hurried northward. Moving quickly through the Papal States and Tuscany, he engaged his troops in the passes of the Apennines near Pontremoli, and on July 5th, 1495, took up his quarters in the village of Fornovo. De Comines reckons that his whole fighting

force at this time did not exceed nine thousand men, with fourteen pieces of artillery. Against him at the opening of the valley was the army of the League, numbering some thirty-five thousand men, of whom three fourths were supplied by Venice, the rest by Lodovico Sforza and the German emperor. Francesco Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua, was the general of the Venetian forces; and on him, therefore, fell the real responsibility of the battle.

De Comines remarks on the imprudence of the allies, who allowed Charles to advance as far as Fornovo, when it was their obvious policy to have established themselves in the village and so have caught the French troops in a trap. It was a Sunday when the French marched down upon Fornovo. Before them spread the plain of Lombardy, and beyond it the white crests of the Alps. "We were," says De Comines, "in a valley between two little mountain flanks, and in that valley ran a river which could easily be forded on foot, except when it is swelled with sudden rains. The whole valley was a bed of gravel and big stones, very difficult for horses, about a quarter of a league in breadth, and on the right bank lodged our enemies." Any one who has visited Fornovo can understand the situation of the two armies. Charles occupied the village on the right bank of the Taro. On the same bank, extending downward towards the plain, lay the host of the allies; and in order that Charles should escape them, it was necessary that he should cross the Taro, just below its junction with the Ceno, and reach Lombardy by marching in a parallel line with his foes.

All through the night of Sunday it thundered and rained incessantly; so that on the Monday morning the Taro was considerably swollen. At seven o'clock the king sent for De Comines, who found him already armed and mounted on the finest horse he had ever seen. The name of this charger was Savoy. He was

black, one-eyed, and of middling height; and to his great courage, as we shall see, Charles owed life upon that day. The French army, ready for the march, now took to the gravelly bed of the Taro, passing the river at a distance of about a quarter of a league from the allies. As the French left Fornovo, the light cavalry of their enemies entered the village and began to attack the baggage. At the same time the Marquis of Mantua, with the flower of his men-at-arms, crossed the Taro and harassed the rear of the French host; while raids from the right bank to the left were constantly being made by sharp-shooters and flying squadrons. "At this moment," says De Comines, "not a single man of us could have escaped if our ranks had once been broken." The French army was divided into three main bodies. The vanguard consisted of some three hundred and fifty men-at-arms, three thousand Switzers, three hundred archers of the Guard, a few mounted crossbowmen, and the artillery. Next came the Battle, and after this the rear-guard. At the time when the Marquis of Mantua made his attack, the French rear-guard had not yet crossed the river. Charles quitted the van, put himself at the head of his chivalry, and charged the Italian horsemen, driving them back, some to the village and others to their camp. De Comines observes, that had the Italian knights been supported in this passage of arms by the light cavalry of the Venetian force, called Stradiots, the French must have been outnumbered, thrown into confusion, and defeated. As it was, these Stradiots were engaged in plundering the baggage of the French; and the Italians, accustomed to bloodless encounters, did not venture, in spite of their immense superiority of numbers, to renew the charge. In the pursuit of Gonzaga's horsemen Charles outstripped his staff, and was left almost alone to grapple with a little band of mounted foemen. It was here that his noble horse, Savoy, saved his person by plunging and charging till assistance came up from the French, and enabled the king to regain his van.

It is incredible, considering the nature of the ground and the number of the troops engaged, that the allies should not have returned to the attack and have made the passage of the French into the plain impossible. De Comines, however, assures us that the actual engagement only lasted a quarter of an hour, and the pursuit of the Italians three quarters of an hour. After they had once resolved to fly, they threw away their lances and betook themselves to Reggio and Parma. So complete was their discomfiture, that De Comines gravely blames the want of military genius and adventure in the French host. If, instead of advancing along the left bank of the Taro and there taking up his quarters for the night, Charles had recrossed the stream and pursued the army of the allies, he would have had the whole of Lombardy at his discretion. As it was, the French army encamped not far from the scene of the action in great discomfort and anxiety. De Comines had to bivouac in a vineyard, without even a mantle to wrap round him, having lent his cloak to the king in the morning; and as it had been pouring all day, the ground could not have afforded very luxurious quarters. The same extraordinary luck which had attended the French in their whole expedition now favored their retreat; and the same pusillanimity which the allies had shown at Fornovo prevented them from re-forming and engaging with the army of Charles upon the plain. One hour before daybreak on Tuesday morning the French broke up their camp and succeeded in clearing the valley. That night they lodged at Fiorenzuola, the next at Piacenza, and so on; till on the eighth day they arrived at Asti without having been so much as incommoded by the army of the allies in their rear.

Although the field of Fornovo was in reality so disgraceful to the Italians, they reckoned it a victory upon the technical pretence that the camp and baggage of the French had been seized. Illuminations and rejoicings made the piazza of St. Mark in Venice

gay, and Francesco da Gonzaga had the glorious Madonna della Vittoria painted for him by Mantegna, in commemoration of what ought only to have been remembered with shame.

A fitting conclusion to this sketch, connecting its close with the commencement, may be found in some remarks upon the manner of warfare to which the Italians of the Renaissance had become accustomed, and which proved so futile on the field of Fornovo. During the Middle Ages, and in the days of the Communes, the whole male population of Italy had fought light armed on foot. Merchant and artisan left the counting-house and the workshop, took shield and pike, and sallied forth to attack the barons in their castles, or to meet the emperor's troops upon the field. It was with this national militia that the citizens of Florence freed their *Contado* of the nobles, and the burghers of Lombardy gained the battle of Legnano. In course of time, by a process of change which it is not very easy to trace, heavily armed cavalry began to take the place of infantry in mediæval warfare. Men-at-arms, as they were called, encased from head to foot in iron, and mounted upon chargers no less solidly caparisoned, drove the foot-soldiers before them at the points of their long lances. Nowhere in Italy do they seem to have met with the fierce resistance which the bears of the Swiss Oberland and the bulls of Uri offered to the knights of Burgundy. No Tuscan Arnold von Winkelried clasped a dozen lances to his bosom that the foeman's ranks might thus be broken at the cost of his own life; nor did it occur to the Italian burghers to meet the charge of the horsemen with squares protected by bristling spears. They seem, on the contrary, to have abandoned military service with the readiness of men whose energies were already absorbed in the affairs of peace. To become a practised and efficient man-at-arms required long training and a life's devotion. So much time the burghers of the free towns could not spare to military service,

while the petty nobles were only too glad to devote themselves to so honorable a calling. Thus it came to pass that a class of professional fighting-men was gradually formed in Italy, whose services the burghers and the princes bought, and by whom the wars of the peninsula were regularly farmed by contract. Wealth and luxury in the great cities continued to increase; and as the burghers grew more comfortable, they were less inclined to take the field in their own persons, and more disposed to vote large sums of money for the purchase of necessary aid. At the same time this system suited the despots, since it spared them the peril of arming their own subjects, while they taxed them to pay the services of foreign captains. War thus became a commerce. Romagna, the Marches of Ancona, and other parts of the papal dominions supplied a number of petty nobles whose whole business in life it was to form companies of trained horsemen, and with these bands to hire themselves out to the republics and the despots. Gain was the sole purpose of these captains. They sold their service to the highest bidder, fighting irrespectively of principle or patriotism, and passing with the coldest equanimity from the camp of one master to that of his worst foe. It was impossible that true military spirit should survive this prostitution of the art of war. A species of mock warfare prevailed in Italy. Battles were fought with a view to booty more than victory; prisoners were taken for the sake of ransom; bloodshed was carefully avoided, for the men who fought on either side in any pitched field had been comrades with their present foemen in the last encounter, and who could tell how soon the general of the one host might not need his rival's troops to recruit his own ranks? Like every genuine institution of the Italian Renaissance, warfare was thus a work of fine art, a masterpiece of intellectual subtlety; and, like the Renaissance itself, this peculiar form of warfare was essentially transitional. The cannon and the musket were already in use;

and it only required one blast of gunpowder to turn the sham-fight of courtly, traitorous, finessing captains of adventure into something terribly more real. To men like the Marquis of Mantua war had been a highly profitable game of skill ; to men like the Maréchal de Gié it was a murderous horse-play ; and this difference the Italians were not slow to perceive. When they cast away their lances at Fornovo, and fled—in spite of their superior numbers—never to return, one fair-seeming sham of the fifteenth century became a vision of the past.

TWO DRAMATISTS OF THE LAST CENTURY.

THERE are few contrasts more striking than that which is presented by the memoirs of Goldoni and Alfieri. Both of these men bore names highly distinguished in the history of Italian literature. Both of them were framed by nature with strongly marked characters, and fitted to perform a special work in the world. Both have left behind them records of their lives and literary labors singularly illustrative of their peculiar differences. There is no instance in which we see more clearly the philosophical value of autobiographies than in these vivid pictures which the great Italian tragedian and comic author have delineated. Some of the most interesting works of Leonardo da Vinci, Giorgione, Albert Dürer, Rembrandt, Rubens, and Andrea del Sarto are their portraits painted by themselves. These pictures exhibit not only the lineaments of the masters, but also their art. The hand which drew them was the hand which drew the "Last Supper," or the "Madonna of the Tribune:" color, method, chiaroscuro, all that makes up manner in painting, may be studied on the same canvas as that which faithfully represents the features of the man whose genius gave his style its special character. We seem to understand the clear, calm majesty of Leonardo's manner, the silver-gray harmonies and smooth facility of Andrea's Madonnas, the better for looking at their faces drawn by their own hands at Florence. And if this be the case with a dumb picture, how far higher must be the interest and importance of the written life of a known author. Not only do we recognize in its composition the style and temper and habits of thought which are familiar to

us in his other writings; but we also hear from his own lips how these were formed, how his tastes took their peculiar direction, what circumstances acted on his character, what hopes he had, and where he failed. Even should his autobiography not bear the marks of uniform candor, it probably reveals more of the actual truth, more of the man's real nature in its height and depth, than any memoir written by friend or foe. Its unconscious admissions, its general spirit, and the inferences which we draw from its perusal are far more valuable than any mere statement of facts or external analysis, however scientific. When we become acquainted with the series of events which led to the conception or attended the production of some masterpiece of literature, a new light is thrown upon its beauties, fresh life bursts forth from every chapter, and we seem to have a nearer and more personal interest in its success. What a powerful sensation, for instance, is that which we experience when, after studying the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Gibbon tells us how the thought of writing it came to him upon the Capitol, among the ruins of dead Rome, and within hearing of the mutter of the monks of Ara Cœli, and how he finished it one night by Lake Geneva, and laid his pen down and walked forth and saw the stars above his terrace at Lausanne.

The memoirs of Alfieri and Goldoni are not deficient in any of the characteristics of good autobiography. They seem to bear upon their face the stamp of truthfulness, they illustrate their authors' lives with marvellous lucidity, and they are full of interest as stories. But it is to the contrast which they present that our attention should be chiefly drawn. Other biographies may be as interesting and amusing. None show in a more marked manner two distinct natures endowed with genius for one art, and yet designed in every possible particular for different branches of that art. Alfieri embodies Tragedy; Goldoni is the spirit of Comedy.

They are both Italians: their tragedies and comedies are by no means cosmopolitan; but this national identity of character only renders more remarkable the individual divergences by which they were impelled into their different paths. Thalia seems to have made the one, body, soul, and spirit; and Melpomene the other; each goddess launched her favorite into circumstances suited to the evolution of his genius, and presided over his development, so that at his death she might exclaim, Behold the living model of my Art!

Goldoni was born at Venice in the year 1707; he had already reached celebrity when Alfieri saw the light for the first time, in 1749, at Asti. Goldoni's grandfather was a native of Modena, who had settled in Venice, and there lived with the prodigality of a rich and ostentatious *bourgeois*. "Amid riot and luxury did I enter the world," says the poet, after enumerating the banquets and theatrical displays with which the old Goldoni entertained his guests in his Venetian palace and country-house. Venice at that date was certainly the proper birthplace for a comic poet. The splendor of the Renaissance had thoroughly habituated her nobles to pleasures of the sense, and had enervated their proud, maritime character, while the great name of the republic robbed them of the caution for which they used to be conspicuous. Yet the real strength of Venice was almost spent, and nothing remained but outward insolence and prestige. Everything was gay about Goldoni in his earliest childhood. Puppet-shows were built to amuse him by his grandfather. "My mother," he says, "took charge of my education, and my father of my amusements."

Let us turn to the opening scene in Alfieri's life, and mark the difference. A father above sixty, "noble, wealthy, and respectable," who died before his son had reached the age of one year old. A mother devoted to religion, the widow of one marquis, and after the death of a second husband, Alfieri's father, married

for the third time to a nobleman of ancient birth. These were Alfieri's parents. He was born in a solemn palazzo in the country town of Asti, and at the age of five already longed for death as an escape from disease and other earthly troubles. So noble and so wealthy was the youthful poet that an abbé was engaged to carry out his education, but not to teach him more than a count should know. Except this worthy man he had no companions whatever. Strange ideas possessed the boy. He ruminated on his melancholy, and when eight years old attempted suicide. At this age he was sent to the academy at Turin, attended, as befitted a lad of his rank, by a man-servant, who was to remain and wait on him at school. Alfieri stayed here several years without revisiting his home, tyrannized over by the valet who added to his grandeur, constantly subject to sickness, and kept in almost total ignorance by his incompetent preceptors. The gloom and pride and stoicism of his temperament were augmented by this unnatural discipline. His spirit did not break, but took a haughtier and more disdainful tone. He became familiar with misfortunes. He learned to brood over and intensify his passions. Every circumstance of his life seemed strung up to a tragic pitch. This at least is the impression which remains upon our mind after reading in his memoirs the narrative of what must in many of its details have been a common school-boy's life at that time.

Meanwhile, what had become of young Goldoni? His boyhood was as thoroughly plebeian, various, and comic as Alfieri's had been patrician, monotonous, and tragical. Instead of one place of residence, we read of twenty. Scrape succeeds to scrape, adventure to adventure. Knowledge of the world, and some book learning also, flow in upon the boy, and are eagerly caught up by him and heterogeneously amalgamated in his mind. Alfieri learned nothing, wrote nothing, in his youth, and heard his parents say—"A nobleman need never strive to be a doctor of the faculties."

Goldoni had a little medicine and much law thrust upon him. At eight he wrote a comedy, and ere long began to read the plays of Plautus, Terence, Aristophanes, and Machiavelli. Between the nature of the two poets there was a marked and characteristic difference as to their mode of labor and of acquiring knowledge. Both of them loved fame, and wrought for it; but Alfieri did so from a sense of pride and a determination to excel; while Goldoni loved the approbation of his fellows, sought their compliments, and basked in the sunshine of smiles. Alfieri wrote with labor. Each tragedy he composed went through a triple process of composition, and received frequent polishing when finished. Goldoni dashed off his pieces with the greatest ease on every possible subject. He once produced sixteen comedies in one theatrical season. Alfieri's were like lion's whelps—brought forth with difficulty, and at long intervals; Goldoni's, like the brood of a hare—many, frequent, and as agile as their parent. Alfieri amassed knowledge scrupulously, but with infinite toil. He mastered Greek and Hebrew when he was past forty. Goldoni never gave himself the least trouble to learn anything, but trusted to the ready wit, good memory, and natural powers, which helped him in a hundred strange emergencies. Power of will and pride sustained the one; facility and a good-humored vanity the other. This contrast was apparent at a very early age. We have seen how Alfieri passed his time at Turin, in a kind of aristocratic prison of educational ignorance. Goldoni's grandfather died when he was five years old, and left his family in great embarrassment. The poet's father went off to practise medicine at Perugia. His son followed him, acquired the rudiments of knowledge in that town, and then proceeded to study philosophy alone at Rimini. There was no manservant or academy in his case. He was far too plebeian and too free. The boy lodged with a merchant, and got some smattering of Thomas Aquinas and the Peripatetics into his small brain, while

he contrived to form a friendship with an acting company. They were on the wing for Venice in a coasting boat, which would touch at Chiozza, where Goldoni's mother then resided. The boy pleased them. Would he like the voyage? This offer seemed too tempting, and away he rushed, concealed himself on board, and made one of a merry, motley shipload. "Twelve persons, actors as well as actresses, a prompter, a machinist, a storekeeper, eight domestics, four chambermaids, two nurses, children of every age, cats, dogs, monkeys, parrots, birds, pigeons, and a lamb; it was another Noah's ark." The young poet felt at home; how could a comic poet feel otherwise? They laughed, they sang, they danced; they ate and drank, and played at cards. "Macaroni! Every one fell on it, and three dishes were devoured. We had also *alamode* beef, cold fowl, a loin of veal, a dessert, and excellent wine. What a charming dinner! No cheer like a good appetite." Their harmony, however, was disturbed. The *première amoureuse*, who, in spite of her rank and title, was ugly and cross, and required to be coaxed with cups of chocolate, lost her cat. She tried to kill the whole boat-load of beasts—cats, dogs, monkeys, parrots, pigeons, even the lamb stood in danger of her wrath. A regular quarrel ensued, was somehow set at peace, and all began to laugh again. This is a sample of Goldoni's youth. Comic pleasures, comic dangers; nothing deep or lasting, but light and shadow cheerfully distributed, clouds lowering with storm, a distant growl of thunder, then a gleam of light and sunshine breaking overhead. He gets articled to an attorney at Venice, then goes to study law at Pavia; studies society instead, and flirts, and finally is expelled for writing satires. Then he takes a turn at medicine with his father in Friuli, and acts as clerk to the criminal chancellor at Chiozza.

Every employment seems easy to him, but he really cares for none but literature. He spends all his spare time in reading and in amusements, and begins to write a tragic opera. This proves,

however, eminently unsuccessful, and he burns it in a comic fit of anger. One laughable love-affair in which he engaged at Udine exhibits his adventures in their truly comic aspect. It reminds us of the scene in *Don Giovanni*, where Leporello personates the Don and deceives Donna Elvira. Goldoni had often noticed a beautiful young lady at church and on the public drives: she was attended by a waiting-maid, who soon perceived that her mistress had excited the young man's admiration, and who promised to befriend him in his suit. Goldoni was told to repair at night to the palace of his mistress, and to pour his passion forth beneath her window. Impatiently he waited for the trysting hour, conned his love-sentences, and gloried in the romance of the adventure. When night came, he found the window, and a veiled figure of a lady in the moonlight, whom he supposed at once to be his mistress. Her he eloquently addressed in the true style of Romeo's rapture, and she answered him. Night after night this happened, but sometimes he was a little troubled by a sound of ill-suppressed laughter interrupting the *tête-à-tête*. Meanwhile Teresa, the waiting-maid, received from his hands costly presents for her mistress, and made him promises on her part in exchange. As she proved unable to fulfil them, Goldoni grew suspicious, and at last discovered that the veiled figure to whom he had poured out his tale of love was none other than Teresa, and that the laughter had proceeded from her mistress, whom the faithless waiting-maid regaled at her lover's expense. Thus ended this ridiculous matter. Goldoni was not, however, cured by his experience. One other love-affair rendered Udine too hot to hold him, and in consequence of a third he had to fly from Venice just when he was beginning to flourish there. At length he married comfortably and suitably, settling down into a quiet life with a woman whom, if he did not love her with passion, he at least respected and admired. Goldoni, in fact, had no real passion in his nature.

Alfieri, on the other hand, was given over to volcanic ebullitions of the most ungovernable hate and affection, joy and sorrow. The chains of love which Goldoni courted so willingly Alfieri regarded with the greatest shyness. But while Goldoni healed his heart of all its bruises in a week or so, the tragic poet bore about him wounds that would not close. He enumerates three serious passions which possessed his whole nature, and at times deprived him almost of his reason. A Dutch lady first won his heart, and when he had to leave her, Alfieri suffered so intensely that he never opened his lips during the course of a long journey through Germany, Switzerland, and Piedmont. Fevers, and suicides attempted but interrupted, marked the termination of this tragic amour. His second passion had for its object an English lady, with whose injured husband he fought a duel, although his collar-bone was broken at the time. The lady proved unworthy of Alfieri as well as of her husband, and the poet left her in a most deplorable state of hopelessness and intellectual prostration. At last he formed a permanent affection for the wife of Prince Charles Edward, the Countess of Albany, in close friendship with whom he lived after her husband's death. The society of this lady gave him perfect happiness; but it was founded on her lofty beauty, the pathos of her situation, and her intellectual qualities. Melpomene presided at this union, while Thalia blessed the nuptials of Goldoni. How characteristic also were the adventures which these two pairs of lovers encountered! Goldoni once carried his wife upon his back across two rivers in their flight from the Spanish to the Austrian camp at Rimini, laughing and groaning, and perceiving the humor of his situation all the time. Alfieri, on an occasion of even greater difficulty, was stopped with his illustrious friend at the gates of Paris in 1792. They were flying in post-chaises, with their servants and their baggage, from the devoted city, when a troop of *sansculottes*

rushed on them, surged around the carriage, called them aristocrats, and tried to drag them off to prison. Alfieri with his tall, gaunt figure, pallid face, and red, voluminous hair, stormed, raged, and raised his deep bass voice above the tumult. For half an hour he fought with them, then made his coachmen gallop through the gates, and scarcely halted till they got to Gravelines. By this prompt movement they escaped arrest and death at Paris. These two scenes would make agreeable companion pictures: Goldoni staggering beneath his wife across the muddy bed of an Italian stream—the smiling writer of agreeable plays, with his half-tearful helpmate ludicrous in her disasters; Alfieri mad with rage among Parisian Mænads, his princess quaking in her carriage, the air hoarse with cries, and death and safety trembling in the balance. It is no wonder that the one man wrote *La Donna di Garbo* and the *Cortese Veneziano*, while the other was inditing essays on Tyranny and dramas of *Antigone*, *Timoleon*, and *Brutus*.

The difference between the men is seen no less remarkably in regard to courage. Alfieri was a reckless rider, and astonished even English huntsmen by his desperate leaps. In one of them he fell and broke his collar-bone, but not the less he held his tryst with a fair lady, climbed her park gates, and fought a duel with her husband. Goldoni was a pantaloon for cowardice. In the room of an inn at Desenzano which he occupied together with a female fellow-traveller, an attempt was made to rob them by a thief at night. All Goldoni was able to do consisted in crying out for help, and the lady called him “M. l’Abbé” ever after for his want of pluck. Goldoni must have been by far the more agreeable of the two. In all his changes from town to town of Italy he found amusement and brought gayety. The sights, the theatres, the society aroused his curiosity. He trembled with excitement at the performance of his pieces, made friends with the actors, taught them, and wrote parts to suit their qualities. At

Pisa he attended as a stranger the meeting of the Arcadian Academy, and at its close attracted all attention to himself by his clever improvisation. He was in truth a ready-witted man, pliable, full of resource, bred half a valet, half a Roman *græculus*. Alfieri saw more of Europe than Goldoni. France, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, England, Spain, all parts of Italy, he visited with restless haste. From land to land he flew, seeking no society, enjoying nothing, dashing from one inn door to another with his servants and his carriages, and thinking chiefly of the splendid stud of horses which he took about with him upon his travels. He was a lonely, stiff, self-engrossed, indomitable man. He could not rest at home: he could not bear to be the vassal of a king and breathe the air of courts. So he lived always on the wing, and ended by exiling himself from Sardinia in order to escape the trammels of paternal government. As for his tragedies, he wrote them to win laurels from posterity. He never cared to see them acted; he bullied even his printers and correctors; he cast a glove down in defiance of his critics. Goldoni sought the smallest meed of approbation. It pleased him hugely in his old age to be Italian master to a French princess. Alfieri openly despised the public. Goldoni wrote because he liked to write; Alfieri, for the sake of proving his superior powers. Against Alfieri's hatred of Turin and its trivial solemnities, we have to set Goldoni's love of Venice and its petty pleasures. He would willingly have drunk chocolate and played at dominos or piquet all his life on the Piazza di San Marco, when Alfieri was crossing the sierras on his Andalusian horse, and devouring a frugal meal of rice in solitude. Goldoni glided through life an easy man, with genial, venial thoughts; with a clear, gay, gentle temper; a true sense of what is good and just; and a heart that loved diffusively, if not too warmly. Many were the checks and obstacles thrown on his path; but round them or above them he passed nimbly, without scar or

seath. Poverty went close behind him, but he kept her off, and never felt the pinch of need. Alfieri strained and strove against the barriers of fate; a sombre, rugged man, prond, candid, and self-confident, who broke or bent all opposition; now moving solemnly with tragic pomp, now dashing passionately forward by the might of will. Goldoni drew his inspirations from the moment and surrounding circumstances. Alfieri pursued an ideal, slowly formed, but strongly fashioned and resolutely followed. Of wealth he had plenty and to spare, but he disregarded it, and was a Stoic in his mode of life. He was an unworldly man, and hated worldliness. Goldoni, but for his authorship, would certainly have grown a prosperous advocate, and died of gout in Venice. Goldoni liked smart clothes; Alfieri went always in black. Goldoni's fits of spleen—for he *was* melancholy now and then—lasted a day or two, and disappeared before a change of place. Alfieri dragged his discontent about with him all over Europe, and let it interrupt his work and mar his intellect for many months together. Alfieri was a patriot, and hated France. Goldoni never speaks of politics, and praises Paris as a heaven on earth. The genial moralizing of the latter appears childish by the side of Alfieri's terse philosophy and pregnant remarks on the development of character. What suits the page of Plautus would look poor in *Ædipus* or *Agamemnon*. Goldoni's memoirs are diffuse and flippant in their light French dress. They seem written to please. Alfieri's Italian style marches with dignity and Latin terseness. He rarely condescends to smile. He writes to instruct the world and to satisfy himself. Grim humor sometimes flashes out, as when he tells the story of the Order of Homer, which he founded. How different from Goldoni's naïve account of his little ovation in the theatre at Paris!

But it would be idle to carry on this comparison, already tedious. The life of Goldoni was one long scene of shifts and jests,

of frequent triumphs and some failures, of lessons hard at times, but kindly. Passions and ennui, flashes of heroic patriotism, constant suffering and stoical endurance, art and love idealized, fill up the life of Alfieri. Goldoni clung much to his fellow-men, and shared their pains and pleasures. Alfieri spent many of his years in almost absolute solitude. On the whole character and deeds of the one man was stamped Comedy; the other was own son of Tragedy.

If, after reading the autobiographies of Alfieri and Goldoni, we turn to the perusal of their plays, we shall perceive that there is no better commentary on the works of an artist than his life, and no better life than one written by himself. The old style of criticism, which strove to separate an author's productions from his life, and even from the age in which he lived; to set up an arbitrary canon of taste, and to select one or two great painters or poets as ideals because they seemed to illustrate that canon, has passed away. We are beginning to feel that art is a part of history and of physiology. That is to say, the artist's work can only be rightly understood by studying his age and temperament. Goldoni's versatility and want of depth induced him to write sparkling comedies. The merry life men passed at Venice in its years of decadence proved favorable to his genius. Alfieri's melancholy and passionate qualities, fostered in solitude, and aggravated by a tyranny he could not bear, led him irresistibly to tragic composition. Though a noble, his nobility only added to his pride, and insensibly his intellect had been imbued with the democratic sentiments which were destined to shake Europe in his lifetime. This, in itself, was a tragic circumstance, bringing him into close sympathy with the Brutus, the Prometheus, the Timoleon of ancient history. Goldoni's *bourgeoisie*, in the atmosphere of which he was born and bred, was essentially comic. The true comedy of manners, which is quite distinct from Shake-

spere's fancy or from Aristophanic satire, is always laid in middle life. Though Goldoni tried to write tragedies, they were unimpassioned, dull, and tame. He lacked altogether the fire, high-wrought nobility of sentiment, and sense of form essential for tragic art. On the other hand, Alfieri composed some comedies before his death which were devoid of humor, grace, and lightness. A strange elephantine eccentricity is their utmost claim to comic character. Indeed, the temper of Alfieri, ever in extremes, led him even to exaggerate the qualities of tragedy. He carried its severity to a pitch of dulness and monotony. His chiaroscuro was too strong—virtue and villany appearing in pure black and white upon his pages. His hatred of tyrants induced him to transgress the rules of probability, so that it has been well said that if his wicked kings had really had such words of scorn and hatred thrown at them by their victims, they were greatly to be pitied. On the other hand, his pithy laconisms have often a splendidly tragical effect. There is nothing in the modern drama more rhetorically impressive, though spasmodic, than the well-known dialogue between Antigone and Creon :

" *Cr.* Seegliesti ?

" *Ant.* Ho scelto.

" *Cr.* Emon ?

" *Ant.* Morte.

" *Cr.* L'avrai !"

Goldoni's comedies, again, have not enough of serious thought or of true creative imagination to be works of high art. They lean too much to the side of farce ; they have none of the tragic salt which gives a dignity to *Tartuffe*. They are, in a word, almost too euehistically comic. J

The contrast between these authors might lead us to raise the question long ago discussed by Socrates at Agathon's banquet—Can the same man write both comedies and tragedies ? We in

England are accustomed to read the serious and comic plays of Shakespeare, Fletcher, Jonson, and to think that one poet could excel in either branch. The custom of the Elizabethan theatre obliged this double authorship; yet it must be confessed that Shakespeare's comedies are not such comedies as Greek or Roman or French critics would admit. They are works of the purest imagination, wholly free from the laws of this world; while the tragedies of Fletcher have a melodramatic air equally at variance with the classical Melpomene. It may very seriously be doubted whether the same mind could produce, with equal power, a comedy like the *Cortese Veneziano* and a tragedy like Alfieri's *Brutus*. At any rate, returning to our old position, we find in these two men the very opposite conditions of dramatic genius. They are, as it were, specimens prepared by Nature for the instruction of those who analyze genius in its relations to temperament, to life, and to external circumstances.

CREMA AND THE CRUCIFIX.

FEW people visit Crema. It is a little country town of Lombardy, between Cremona and Treviglio, with no historic memories but very misty ones belonging to the days of the Visconti dynasty. On every side around the city walls stretch smiling vineyards and rich meadows, where the elms are married to the mulberry-trees by long festoons of foliage hiding purple grapes, where the sunflowers droop their heavy golden heads among tall stems of millet and gigantic maize, and here and there a rice-crop ripens in the marshy loam. In vintage time the carts, drawn by their white oxen, come creaking townward in the evening, laden with blue bunches. Down the long straight roads, between rows of poplars, they creep on; and on the shafts beneath the pyramid of fruit lie contadini stained with lees of wine. Far off across that "waveless sea" of Lombardy, which has been the battle-field of countless generations, rise the dim, gray Alps, or else pearled domes of thunder-clouds in gleaming masses over some tall solitary tower. Such backgrounds, full of peace, suggestive of almost infinite distance, and dignified with colors of incomparable depth and breadth, the Venetian painters loved. No landscape in Europe is more wonderful than this—thrice wonderful in the vastness of its arching heavens, in the stillness of its level plain, and in the bulwark of huge crested mountains, reared afar like bastions against the northern sky.

The little town is all alive in this September weather. At every corner of the street, under rustling abeles and thick-foliaged planes, at the doors of palaces and in the yards of inns, men,

naked from the thighs downward, are treading the red must into vats and tuns; while their mild-eyed oxen lie beneath them in the road, peaceably chewing the cud between one journey to the vineyard and another. It must not be imagined that the scene of Alma Tadema's "Roman Vintage," or what we fondly picture to our fancy of the Athenian Lenæa, is repeated in the streets of Crema. This modern treading of the wine-press is a very prosaic affair. The town reeks with a sour smell of old casks and crushed grape-skins, and the men and women at work bear no resemblance whatever to Bacchus and his crew. Yet even as it is, the Lombard vintage, beneath floods of sunlight and a pure blue sky, is beautiful; and he who would fain make acquaintance with Crema, should time his entry into the old town, if possible, on some still, golden afternoon of autumn. It is then, if ever, that he will learn to love the glowing brickwork of its churches and the quaint terra-cotta traceries that form its chief artistic charm.

How the unique brick architecture of the Lombard cities took its origin—whether from the precepts of Byzantine aliens in the earliest Middle Ages, or from the native instincts of a mixed race composed of Gallic, Ligurian, Roman, and Teutonic elements, under the leadership of Longobardic rulers—is a question for antiquarians to decide. There can, however, be no doubt that the monuments of the Lombard style, as they now exist, are no less genuinely local, no less characteristic of the country they adorn, no less indigenous to the soil they sprang from, than the Attic colonnades of Mnesicles and Ictinus. What the marble quarries of Pentelicus were to the Athenian builders, the clay beneath their feet was to those Lombard craftsmen. From it they fashioned structures as enduring, towers as majestic, and cathedral aisles as solemn as were ever wrought from chiselled stone. There is a true sympathy between those buildings and the Lombard landscape, which by itself might suffice to prove the originality of

their almost unknown architects. The rich color of the baked clay—finely modulated from a purplish red, through russet, crimson, pink, and orange, to pale yellow and dull gray—harmonizes with the brilliant greenery of Lombard vegetation and with the deep azure of the distant Alpine range. Reared aloft above the flat expanse of plain, those square *torroni*, tapering into octagons and crowned with slender cones, break the long sweeping lines and infinite horizons with a contrast that affords relief, and yields a resting-place to tired eyes; while, far away, seen haply from some bridge above Ticino, or some high-built palace loggia, they gleam like columns of pale rosy fire against the front of mustering storm-clouds blue with rain. In that happy orchard of Italy, a pergola of vines in leaf, a clump of green acacias, and a campanile soaring above its church roof, brought into chance combination with the reaches of the plain and the dim mountain-range, make up a picture eloquent in its suggestive beauty.

Those ancient builders wrought cunningly with their material. The bricks are fashioned and fixed to last for all time. Exposed to the icy winds of a Lombard winter, to the fierce fire of a Lombard summer, and to the moist vapors of a Lombard autumn; neglected by unheeding generations; with flowers clustering in their crannies, and birds nesting in their eaves, and mason-bees filling the delicate network of their traceries—they still present angles as sharp as when they were but finished, and joints as nice as when the mortar dried in the first months of their building. This immunity from age and injury they owe partly to the imperishable nature of baked clay; partly to the care of the artists who selected and mingled the right sorts of earth, burned them with scrupulous attention, and fitted them together with a patience born of loving service. Each member of the edifice was designed with a view to its ultimate place. The proper curve was ascertained for cylindrical columns and for rounded arches.

Larger bricks were moulded for the supporting walls, and lesser pieces were adapted to the airy vaults and lanterns. In the brickfield and the kiln the whole church was planned and wrought out in its details, before the hands that made a unity of all these scattered elements were set to the work of raising it in air. When they came to put the puzzle together, they laid each brick against its neighbor, filling up the almost imperceptible interstices with liquid cement composed of quicklime and fine sand in water. After five centuries the seams between the layers of bricks that make the bell-tower of S. Gottardo at Milan yield no point of vantage to the penknife or the chisel.

Nor was it in their welding of the bricks alone that these craftsmen showed their science. They were wont to enrich the surface with marble, sparingly but effectively employed—as in those slender detached columns which add such beauty to the octagon of S. Gottardo, or in the string-courses of strange beasts and reptiles that adorn the church-fronts of Pavia. They called to their aid the *mandorlato* of Verona, supporting their porch pillars on the backs of couchant lions, inserting polished slabs on their façades, and building huge sarcophagi into their cloister alleys. Between terra-cotta and this marble of Verona there exists a deep and delicate affinity. It took the name of *mandorlato*, I suppose, from a resemblance to almond blossoms. But it is far from having the simple beauty of a single hue. Like all noble veined stones, it passes by a series of modulations and gradations through a gamut of associated rather than contrasted tints. Not the pink of the almond blossom only, but the creamy whiteness of the almond kernel and the dull yellow of the almond nut may be found in it; and yet these colors are so blended and blurred to all-pervading mellowness, that nowhere is there any shock of contrast or violence of a preponderating tone. The veins which run in labyrinths of crossing, curving, and contorted lines all over its smooth

surface add, no doubt, to this effect of unity. The polish, lastly, which it takes, makes the *mandorlato* shine like a smile upon the sober face of the brickwork; for, serviceable as terra-cotta is for nearly all artistic purposes, it cannot reflect light or gain the illumination which comes from surface brightness.

What the clay can do almost better than any crystalline material, may be seen in the mouldings so characteristic of Lombard architecture. Geometrical patterns of the rarest and most fanciful device; scrolls of acanthus-foliage, and traceries of tendrils; Cupids swinging in festoons of vines; angels joining hands in dance, with fluttering skirts and windy hair, and mouths that symbol singing; grave faces of old men and beautiful profiles of maidens leaning from medallions; wide-winged genii filling the spandrels of cloister arches, and cherubs clustered in the rondure of rose-windows—ornaments like these, wrought from the plastic clay, and adapted with true taste to the requirements of the architecture, are familiar to every one who has studied the church-front of Crema, the cloisters of the Certosa, the courts of the Ospedale Maggiore at Milan, or the public palace of Cremona.

If the *mandorlato* gives a smile to those majestic Lombard buildings, the terra-cotta decorations add the element of life and movement. The thought of the artist in its first freshness and vivacity is felt in them. They have all the spontaneity of improvisation, the seductive melody of unpremeditated music. Moulding the supple earth with "hand obedient to the brain," the *plasticatore* has impressed his most fugitive dreams of beauty on it without effort; and what it cost him but a few fatigueless hours to fashion, the steady heat of the furnace has gifted with imperishable life. Such work, no doubt, has the defects of its qualities. As there are few difficulties to overcome, it suffers from a fatal facility—*nec pluteum cadit nec demorsos sapit unguis*. It is, therefore, apt to be unequal, touching at times the highest point

of inspiration, as in the angels of Guccio at Perugia, and sinking not unfrequently into the commonplace of easy-going triviality, as in the common floral traceries of Milanese windows. But it is never labored, never pedantic, never dulled by the painful effort to subdue an obstinate material to the artist's will. If marble is required to develop the strength of the few supreme sculptors, terra-cotta saves intact the fancies of a crowd of lesser men.

When we reflect that all the force, solemnity, and beauty of the Lombard buildings was evoked from clay, we learn from them this lesson: that the thought of man needs neither precious material nor yet stubborn substance for the production of enduring masterpieces. The red earth was enough for God when he made man in his own image; and mud dried in the sun suffices for the artist, who is next to God in his creative faculty—since *non merita nome di creatore se non Iddio ed il poeta*. After all, what is more everlasting than terra-cotta? The hobnails of the boys who ran across the brickfields in the Roman town of Silchester may still be seen, mingled with the impress of the feet of dogs and hoofs of goats, in the tiles discovered there. Such traces might serve as a metaphor for the footfall of artistic genius, when the form-giver has stamped his thought upon the moist clay, and fire has made that imprint permanent.

Of all these Lombard edifices, none is more beautiful than the Cathedral of Crema, with its delicately finished campanile, built of choicely tinted yellow bricks, and ending in a lantern of the gracefullest, most airily capricious fancy. This bell-tower does not display the gigantic force of Cremona's famous *torrazzo*, shooting three hundred and ninety-six feet into blue ether from the city square; nor can it rival the octagon of S. Gottardo for warmth of hue. Yet it has a character of elegance, combined with boldness of invention, that justifies the citizens of Crema in their pride. It is unique; and he who has not seen it does not

know the whole resources of the Lombard style. The façade of the cathedral displays that peculiar blending of Byzantine or Romanesque round arches with Gothic details in the windows, and with the acute angle of the central pitch which forms the characteristic quality of the late *trecento* Lombard manner. In its combination of purity and richness it corresponds to the best age of decorated work in English Gothic. What, however, strikes a Northern observer is the strange detachment of this elaborate façade from the main structure of the church. Like a frontispiece cut out of cardboard and pierced with ornamental openings, it shoots far above the low roof of the nave; so that at night the moon, rising above the southern aisle, shines through its topmost window, and casts the shadow of its tracery upon the pavement of the square. This is a constructive blemish to which the Italians in no part of the peninsula were sensitive. They seem to have regarded their church-fronts as independent of the edifice, capable of separate treatment, and worthy in themselves of being made the subject of decorative skill.

In the so-called Santuario of Crema—a circular church dedicated to S. Maria della Croce, outside the walls—the Lombard style has been adapted to the manner of the Mid Renaissance. This church was raised in the last years of the fifteenth century by Gian Battista Battagli, an architect of Lodi, who followed the pure rules of taste bequeathed to North Italian builders by Bramante. The beauty of the edifice is due entirely to its tranquil dignity and harmony of parts, the lightness of its circling loggia, and the just proportion maintained between the central structure and the four projecting porticos. The sharp angles of these vestibules afford a contrast to the simplicity of the main building, while their clustered cupolas assist the general effect of roundness aimed at by the architect. Such a church as this proves how much may be achieved by the happy distribution of architectural

masses. It was the triumph of the best Renaissance style to attain lucidity of treatment, and to produce beauty by geometrical proportion. When Leo Battista Alberti complained to his friend, Matteo di Bastia, that a slight alteration of the curves in his design for S. Francesco at Rimini would "spoil his music," *cioè che tu muti discorda tutta quella musica*, this is what he meant. The melody of lines and the harmony of parts made a symphony to his eyes no less agreeable than a concert of tuned lutes and voices to his ears; and to this concord he was so sensitive that any deviation was a discord.

After visiting the churches of Crema and sauntering about the streets awhile, there is nothing left to do but to take refuge in the old Albergo del Pozzo. This is one of those queer Italian inns which carry you away at once into a scene of Goldoni. It is part of some palace where nobles housed their *bravi* in the sixteenth century, and which the lesser people of to-day have turned into a dozen habitations. Its great stone staircase leads to a saloon upon which the various bedchambers open; and round its court-yard runs an open balcony, and from the court grows up a fig-tree, poking ripe fruit against a bedroom window. Oleanders in tubs and red salvias in pots, and kitchen herbs in boxes flourish on the pavement, where the hostler comes to wash his carriages, and where the barber shaves the poodle of the house. Visitors to the Albergo del Pozzo are invariably asked if they have seen the Museo; and when they answer in the negative, they are conducted with some ceremony to a large room on the ground-floor of the inn looking out upon the court-yard and the fig-tree. It was here that I gained the acquaintance of Signor Folcioni and became possessor of an object that has made the memory of Crema doubly interesting to me ever since.

When we entered the Museo we found a little old man, gentle, grave, and unobtrusive, varnishing the ugly portrait of some signor

of the Cinque Cento. Round the walls hung pictures of mediocre value in dingy frames, but all of them bore sounding titles. Titians, Leonardos, Guido Renis, and Luinis looked down and waited for a purchaser. In truth this museum was a *bric-à-brac* shop of a sort that is common enough in Italy, where treasures of old lace, glass, armor, furniture, and tapestry may still be met with. Signor Folcioni began by pointing out the merits of his pictures; and after making due allowance for his zeal as amateur and dealer, it was possible to join in some of his eulogiums. A would-be Titian, for instance, bought in Verona from a noble house in ruins, showed Venetian wealth of color in its gemmy greens and lucid crimsons shining from a background deep and glowing. Then he led us to a walnut-wood bureau of late Renaissance work, profusely carved with nymphs and Cupids, and armed men, among festoons of fruits embossed in high relief. Deeply drilled worm-holes set a seal of antiquity upon the blooming faces and luxuriant garlands, like the touch of Time who "delves the parallels in beauty's brow." On the shelves of an ebony cabinet close by he showed us a row of cups cut out of rock-crystal and mounted in gilt silver, with heaps of engraved gems, old snuff-boxes, coins, medals, sprays of coral, and all the indescribable lumber that one age flings aside as worthless for the next to pick up from the dust-heap and regard as precious. Surely the genius of culture in our century might be compared to a *chiffonnier* of Paris, who, when the night has fallen, goes into the streets, bag on back and lantern in hand, to rake up the waifs and strays a day of whirling life has left him.

The next curiosity was an ivory carving of St. Anthony preaching to the fishes, so fine and small you held it on your palm and used a lens to look at it. Yet there stood the Santo gesticulating, and there were the fishes in rows—the little fishes first, and then the middle-sized, and last of all the great big fishes, almost

out at sea, with their heads above the water and their mouths wide open, just as the *Fioretti di San Francesco* describes them. After this came some original drawings of doubtful interest, and then a case of fifty-two *nielli*. These were of unquestionable value; for has not Cicognara engraved them on a page of his classic monograph? The thin silver plates, over which once passed the burin of Maso Finiguerra, cutting lines finer than hairs, and setting here a shadow in dull acid-eaten gray, and there a high light of exquisite polish, were far more delicate than any proofs impressed from them. These frail masterpieces of Florentine art—the first beginnings of line engraving—we held in our hands while Signor Folcioni read out Cicognara's commentary in a slow, impressive voice, breaking off now and then to point at the originals before us.

The sun had set, and the room was almost dark, when he laid his book down, and said, "I have not much left to show—yet stay! Here are still some little things of interest." He then opened the door into his bedroom and took down from a nail above his bed a wooden crucifix. Few things have fascinated me more than this crucifix—produced without parade, half negligently, from the dregs of his collection by a dealer in old curiosities at Crema. The cross was, or *is*—for it is lying on the table now before me—twenty-one inches in length, made of strong wood, covered with coarse yellow parchment, and shod at the four ends with brass. The Christ is roughly hewn in reddish wood, colored scarlet where the blood streams from the five wounds. Over the head an oval medallion, nailed into the cross, serves as framework to a miniature of the Madonna, softly smiling with a Correggienesque simper. The whole crucifix is not a work of art, but such as may be found in every convent. Its date cannot be earlier than the beginning of the eighteenth century. As I held it in my hand, I thought perhaps this has been carried to the bed-

side of the sick and dying; preachers have brandished it from the pulpit over conscience-stricken congregations; monks have knelt before it on the brick floor of their cells, and novices have kissed it in the vain desire to drown their yearnings after the relinquished world; perhaps it has attended criminals to the scaffold, and heard the secrets of repentant murderers; but why should it be shown me as a thing of rarity? These thoughts passed through my mind, while Signor Folcioni quietly remarked, "I bought this cross from the Frati when their convent was dissolved in Crema." Then he bade me turn it round, and showed a little steel knob fixed into the back between the arms. This was a spring. He pressed it, and the upper and lower parts of the cross came asunder; and, holding the top like a handle, I drew out as from a scabbard a sharp steel blade, concealed in the thickness of the wood behind the very body of the agonizing Christ. What had been a crucifix became a deadly poniard in my grasp, and the rust upon it in the twilight looked like blood. "I have often wondered," said Signor Folcioni, "that the Frati cared to sell me this."

There is no need to raise the question of the genuineness of this strange relic—though I confess to having had my doubts about it—or to wonder for what nefarious purposes the impious weapon was designed—whether the blade was inserted by some rascal monk who never told the tale, or whether it was used on secret service by the friars. On its surface the infernal engine carries a dark certainty of treason, sacrilege, and violence. Yet it would be wrong to incriminate the Order of St. Francis by any suspicion, and idle to seek the actual history of this mysterious weapon. A writer of fiction could, indeed, produce some dark tale in the style of De Stendhal's *nouvelles*, and christen it "The Crucifix of Crema." And how delighted would Webster have been if he had chanced to hear of such a sword-sheath! He

might have placed it in the hands of Bosola for the keener torment of his duchess. Flamineo might have used it; or the disguised friars who made the death-bed of Bracciano hideous might have plunged it in the duke's heart after mocking his eyes with the figure of the suffering Christ. To imagine such an instrument of moral terror mingled with material violence lay within the scope of Webster's sinister and powerful genius. But unless he had seen it with his eyes, what poet would have ventured to devise the thing and display it even in the dumb show of a tragedy? Fact is more wonderful than romance. No apocalypse of Antichrist matches what is told of Roderigo Borgia; and the crucifix of Crema exceeds the sombre fantasy of Webster.

Whatever may be the truth about this cross, it has at any rate the value of a symbol or a metaphor. The idea which it materializes, the historical events of which it is a sign, may well arrest attention. A sword concealed in the crucifix! What emblem brings more forcibly to mind than this that two-edged glaive of persecution which Dominic unsheathed to mow down the populations of Provence and to make Spain destitute of men? Looking upon the crucifix of Crema, we may seem to see pestilence-stricken multitudes of Moors and Jews dying on the coasts of Africa and Italy. The Spaniards enter Mexico, and this is the cross they carry in their hands. They take possession of Peru, and while the gentle people of the Incas come to kiss the bleeding brows of Christ they plunge this dagger in their sides. What, again, was the temporal power of the Papacy but a sword imbedded in a cross? Each Papa Rè, when he ascended the Holy Chair, was forced to take the crucifix of Crema and to bear it till his death. A long procession of war-loving pontiffs, levying armies and paying captains with the pence of St. Peter, in order to keep by arms the lands they had acquired by fraud, defiles before our eyes. First goes the terrible Sixtus IV., who died of grief when news was brought him that the Italian princes had made peace. He

it was who sanctioned the conspiracy to murder the Medici in church at the moment of the elevation of the Host. The brigands hired to do this work refused at the last moment. The sacrilege appalled them. "Then," says the chronicler, "was found a priest who, being used to churches, had no scruple." The poniard this priest carried was this crucifix of Crema. After Sixtus came the blood-stained Borgia; and after him Julius II., whom the Romans in triumphal songs proclaimed a second Mars, and who turned, as Michael Angelo expressed it, the chalices of Rome into swords and helms. Leo X., who dismembered Italy for his brother and nephew; and Clement VII., who broke the neck of Florence and delivered the Eternal City to the spoiler, follow. Of the antinomy between the vicariate of Christ and an earthly kingdom incarnated by these and other holy fathers, what symbol could be found more fitting than a dagger with a crucifix for case and covering?

It is not easy to think or write of these matters without rhetoric. When I laid my head upon my pillow that night in the Albergo del Pozzo at Crema it was full of such thoughts; and when at last sleep came, it brought with it a dream begotten doubtless by the perturbation of my fancy. For I thought that a brown Franciscan, with hollow cheeks and eyes aflame beneath his heavy cowl, sat by my bedside, and, as he raised the crucifix in his lean, quivering hands, whispered a tale of deadly passion and of dastardly revenge. His confession carried me away to a convent garden of Palermo; and there was love in the story, and hate that is stronger than love, and, for the ending of the whole matter, remorse which dies not even in the grave. Each new possessor of the crucifix of Crema, he told me, was forced to hear from him in dreams his dreadful history. But, since it was a dream and nothing more, why should I repeat it? I have wandered far enough already from the vintage and the sunny churches of the little Lombard town.

BERGAMO AND BARTOLOMMEO COLLEONI.

FROM the new town of commerce to the old town of history upon the hill the road is carried along a rampart lined with horse-chestnut trees—clumps of massy foliage and snowy pyramids of bloom expanded in the rapture of a Southern spring. Each pair of trees between their stems and arch of intermingling leaves includes a space of plain checkered with cloud-shadows, melting blue and green in amethystine haze. To right and left the last spurs of the Alps descend, jutting like promontories, heaving like islands from the misty breadth below; and here and there are towers half lost in airy azure, and cities dwarfed to blots, and silvery lines where rivers flow, and distant, vapor-drowned, dim crests of Apennines. The city walls above us wave with snap-dragons and iris among fig-trees sprouting from the riven stones. There are terraces over-rioted with pergolas of vine, and houses shooting forward into balconies and balustrades, from which a Romeo might launch himself at daybreak, warned by the lark's song. A sudden angle in the road is turned, and we pass from air-space and freedom into the old town, beneath walls of dark-brown masonry, where wild valerians light their torches of red bloom in immemorial shade. Squalor and splendor live here side by side. Grand Renaissance portals grinning with satyr masks are flanked by tawdry frescos shamming stonework, or by doorways where the withered bush hangs out a promise of bad wine.

The Cappella Colleoni is our destination—that masterpiece of the sculptor-architect's craft, with its variegated marbles—rosy

and white and creamy yellow and jet-black—in patterns, bass-reliefs, pilasters, statuettes, incrusts on the fanciful domed shrine. Upon the façade are mingled, in the true Renaissance spirit of genial acceptance, motives Christian and Pagan with supreme impartiality. Medallions of emperors and gods alternate with virtues, angels, and cupids in a maze of loveliest arabesque; and round the base of the building are told two stories—the one of Adam from his creation to his fall, the other of Hercules and his labors. Italian craftsmen of the *quattrocento* were not averse to setting thus together, in one framework, the myths of our first parents and Alcmena's son; partly, perhaps, because both subjects gave scope to the free treatment of the nude; but partly, also, we may venture to surmise, because the heroism of Hellas counterbalanced the sin of Eden. Here, then, we see how Adam and Eve were made and tempted and expelled from Paradise and set to labor, how Cain killed Abel, and Lamech slew a man to his hurt, and Isaac was offered on the mountain. The tale of human sin and the promise of redemption are epitomized in twelve of the sixteen bass-reliefs. The remaining four show Hercules wrestling with Antæus, taming the Nemean lion, extirpating the Hydra, and bending to his will the bull of Crete. Labor, appointed for a punishment to Adam, becomes a title to immortality for the hero. The dignity of man is reconquered by prowess for the Greek, as it is repurchased for the Christian by vicarious suffering. Many may think this interpretation of Amadeo's bass-reliefs far-fetched; yet, such as it is, it agrees with the spirit of humanism, bent ever on harmonizing the two great traditions of the past. Of the workmanship little need be said, except that it is wholly Lombard, distinguished from the similar work of Della Quercia at Bologna and Siena by a more imperfect feeling for composition and a lack of monumental gravity, yet graceful, rich in motives, and instinct with a certain wayward *improvvisatore* charm.

This chapel was built by the great Condottiere Bartolommeo Colleoni, to be the monument of his puissance even in the grave. It had been the Sacristy of S. Maria Maggiore, which, when the Consiglio della Misericordia refused it to him for his half-proud, half-pious purpose, he took and held by force. The structure, of costliest materials, reared by Gian Antonio Amadeo, cost him fifty thousand golden florins. An equestrian statue of gilt wood, voted to him by the town of Bergamo, surmounts his monument inside the chapel. This was the work of two German masters called Sisto figlio di Enrico Syri da Norimberga and Leonardo Tedesco. The tomb itself is of marble, executed for the most part in a Lombard style resembling Amadeo's, but scarcely worthy of his genius. The whole effect is disappointing. Five figures representing Mars, Hercules, and three sons-in-law of Colleoni, who surround the sarcophagus of the buried general, are, indeed, almost grotesque. The angularity and crumpled draperies of the Milanese manner, when so exaggerated, produce an impression of caricature. Yet many subordinate details—a row of *putti* in a Cinque Cento frieze, for instance—and much of the low relief work, especially the Crucifixion, with its characteristic episodes of the fainting Marys and the soldiers casting dice, are lovely in their unaffected Lombardism.

There is another portrait of Colleoni in a round above the great door, executed with spirit, though in a *bravura* style that curiously anticipates the decline of Italian sculpture. Gaunt, hollow-eyed, with prominent cheek-bones and strong jaws, this animated half-length statue of the hero bears the stamp of a good likeness, but when or by whom it was made I do not know.

Far more noteworthy than Colleoni's own monument is that of his daughter Medea. She died young in 1470, and her father caused her tomb, carved of Carrara marble, to be placed in the Dominican Church of Basella, which he had previously founded.

It was not until 1842 that this most precious masterpiece of Antonio Amadeo's skill was transferred to Bergamo. *Hic jacet Medea virgo*. Her hands are clasped across her breast. A robe of rich brocade, gathered to the waist and girdled, lies in simple folds upon the bier. Her throat, exceedingly long and slender, is circled with a string of pearls. Her face is not beautiful, for the features, especially the nose, are large and prominent; but it is pure and expressive of vivid individuality. The hair curls in crisp, short clusters; and the ear, fine and shaped almost like a Faun's, reveals the scrupulous fidelity of the sculptor. Italian art has, in truth, nothing more exquisite than this still-sleeping figure of the girl who, when she lived, must certainly have been so rare of type and lovable in personality. If Busti's Lancelotti be the portrait of a humanist, careworn with study, burdened by the laurel leaves that were so dry and dusty; if Gaston de Foix in the Brera, smiling at death and beautiful in the cropped bloom of youth, idealize the hero of romance; if Michael Angelo's *Penseroso* translate in marble the dark broodings of a despot's soul; if Della Porta's Julia Farnese be the Roman courtesan magnificently throned in nonchalance at a pope's footstool; if Verocchio's Colleoni on his horse at Venice impersonate the pomp and circumstance of scientific war—surely this Medea exhales the flower-like graces, the sweet sanctities of human life, that even in that turbid age were found among high-bred Italian ladies. Such power have mighty sculptors, even in our modern world, to make the mute stone speak in poems and clasp the soul's life of a century in some five or six transcendent forms.

The Colleoni, or Coglioni, family were of considerable antiquity and well authenticated nobility in the town of Bergamo. Two lions' heads conjoined formed one of their canting ensigns; another was borrowed from the vulgar meaning of their name. Many members of the house held important office during the

three centuries preceding the birth of the famous general Bartolommeo. He was born in the year 1400 at Solza in the Bergamasque Contado. His father, Paolo, or Pùho as he was commonly called, was poor and exiled from the city, together with the rest of the Guelf nobles, by the Visconti. Being a man of daring spirit, and little inclined to languish in a foreign state as the dependent on some patron, Pùho formed the bold design of seizing the Castle of Trezzo. This he achieved in 1405 by fraud, and afterwards held it as his own by force. Partly with the view of establishing himself more firmly in his acquired lordship, and partly out of family affection, Pùho associated four of his first-cousins in the government of Trezzo. They repaid his kindness with an act of treason and cruelty only too characteristic of those times in Italy. One day while he was playing at draughts in a room of the castle, they assaulted him and killed him, seized his wife and the boy Bartolommeo, and flung them into prison. The murdered Pùho had another son, Antonio, who escaped and took refuge with Giorgio Benzzone, the tyrant of Crema. After a short time the Colleoni brothers found means to assassinate him also; therefore Bartolommeo alone, a child of whom no heed was taken, remained to be his father's avenger. He and his mother lived together in great indigence at Solza, until the lad felt strong enough to enter the service of one of the numerous petty Lombard princes, and to make himself if possible a captain of adventure. His name alone was a sufficient introduction, and the Duchy of Milan, dismembered upon the death of Gian Maria Visconti, was in such a state that all the minor despots were increasing their forces and preparing to defend by arms the fragments they had seized from the Visconti heritage. Bartolommeo therefore had no difficulty in recommending himself to Filippo d' Arcello, sometime general in the pay of the Milanese, but now the new lord of Piacenza. With this master he re-

mained as page for two or three years, learning the use of arms, riding, and training himself in the physical exercises which were indispensable to a young Italian soldier. Meanwhile Filippo Maria Visconti reacquired his hereditary dominions; and at the age of twenty, Bartolommeo found it prudent to seek a patron stronger than D' Arcello. The two great Condottieri, Sforza Attendolo and Braccio, divided the military glories of Italy at this period; and any youth who sought to rise in his profession had to enroll himself under the banners of the one or the other. Bartolommeo chose Braccio for his master, and was enrolled among his men as a simple trooper, or *ragazzo*, with no better prospects than he could make for himself by the help of his talents and his borrowed horse and armor. Braccio at this time was in Apulia, prosecuting the war of the Neapolitan Succession disputed between Alfonso of Aragon and Louis of Anjou under the weak sovereignty of Queen Joan. On which side of a quarrel a condottiere fought mattered but little, so great was the confusion of Italian politics, and so complete was the egotism of these fraudulent, violent, and treacherous party leaders. Yet it may be mentioned that Braccio had espoused Alfonso's cause. Bartolommeo Colleoni early distinguished himself among the ranks of the Bracceschi. But he soon perceived that he could better his position by deserting to another camp. Accordingly he offered his services to Jacopo Caldora, one of Joan's generals, and received from him a commission of twenty men-at-arms. It may here be parenthetically said that the rank and pay of an Italian captain varied with the number of the men he brought into the field. His title "Condottiere" was derived from the circumstance that he was said to have received a *Condotta di venti cavalli*, and so forth. Each *cavallo* was equal to one mounted man-at-arms and two attendants, who were also called *ragazzi*. It was his business to provide the stipulated number of men, to keep

them in good discipline, and to satisfy their just demands. Therefore an Italian army at this epoch consisted of numerous small armies varying in size, each held together by personal engagements to a captain, and all dependent on the will of a general-in-chief, who had made a bargain with some prince or republic for supplying a fixed contingent of fighting-men. The *condottiere* was in other words a contractor or *impresario*, undertaking to do a certain piece of work for a certain price, and to furnish the requisite forces for the business in good working order. It will be readily seen upon this system how important were the personal qualities of the captain, and what great advantages those condottieri had who, like the petty princes of Romagna and the March, the Montefeltri, Ordelaffi, Malatesti, Manfredi, Orsini, and Vitelli, could rely upon a race of hardy vassals for their recruits.

It is not necessary to follow Colleoni's fortunes in the Regno, at Aquila, Ancona, and Bologna. He continued in the service of Caldora, who was now General of the Church, and had his *condotta* gradually increased. Meanwhile his cousins, the murderers of his father, began to dread his rising power, and determined, if possible, to ruin him. He was not a man to be easily assassinated; so they sent a hired ruffian to Caldora's camp to say that Bartolommeo had taken his name by fraud, and that he was himself the real son of Pùho Colleoni. Bartolommeo defied the liar to a duel; and this would have taken place before the army, had not two witnesses appeared who knew the fathers of both Colleoni and the *bravo*, and who gave such evidence that the captains of the army were enabled to ascertain the truth. The impostor was stripped and drummed out of the camp.

At the conclusion of a peace between the Pope and the Bolognese, Bartolommeo found himself without occupation. He now offered himself to the Venetians, and began to fight again under the great Carmagnola against Filippo Visconti. His en-

gagement allowed him forty men, which, after the judicial murder of Carmagnola at Venice in 1432, were increased to eighty. Erasmo da Narni, better known as Gattamelata, was now his general-in-chief—a man who had risen from the lowest fortunes to one of the most splendid military positions in Italy. Colleoni spent the next years of his life, until 1443, in Lombardy, manœuvring against Il Piccinino, and gradually rising in the Venetian service, until his condotta reached the number of eight hundred men. Upon Gattamelata's death at Padua in 1440, Colleoni became the most important of the generals who had fought with Caldora in the March. The lordships of Romano in the Bergamasque, and of Covo and Antegnate in the Cremonese, had been assigned to him; and he was in a position to make independent engagements with princes. What distinguished him as a general was a combination of caution with audacity. He united the brilliant system of his master Braccio with the more prudent tactics of the Sforzeschi; and thus, though he often surprised his foes by daring stratagems and vigorous assaults, he rarely met with any serious check. He was a captain who could be relied upon for boldly seizing an advantage, no less than for using a success with discretion. Moreover he had acquired an almost unique reputation for honesty in dealing with his masters, and for justice combined with humane indulgence to his men. His company was popular, and he could always bring capital troops into the field.

In the year 1443, Colleoni quitted the Venetian service on account of a quarrel with Gherardo Dandolo, the Proveditore of the Republic. He now took a commission from Filippo Maria Visconti, who received him at Milan with great honor, bestowed on him the Castello Adorno at Pavia, and sent him into the March of Ancona upon a military expedition. Of all Italian tyrants, this Visconti was the most difficult to serve. Constitutionally

timid, surrounded with a crowd of spies and base informers, shrinking from the sight of men in the recesses of his palace, and controlling the complicated affairs of his duchy by means of correspondents and intelligencers, this last scion of the Milanese despots lived like a spider in an inscrutable network of suspicion and intrigue. His policy was one of endless plot and counter-plot. He trusted no man; his servants were paid to act as spies on one another; his body-guard consisted of mutually hostile mercenaries; his captains in the field were watched and thwarted by commissioners appointed to check them at the point of successful ambition or magnificent victory. The historian has a hard task when he tries to fathom the Visconti's schemes, or to understand his motives. Half the duke's time seems to have been spent in unravelling the webs that he had woven, in undoing his own work, and weakening the hands of his chosen ministers. Conscious that his power was artificial, that the least breath might blow him back into the nothingness from which he had arisen on the wrecks of his father's tyranny, he dreaded the personal eminence of his generals above all things. His chief object was to establish a system of checks, by means of which no one whom he employed should at any moment be great enough to threaten him. The most formidable of these military adventurers, Francesco Sforza, had been secured by marriage with Bianca Maria Visconti, his master's only daughter, in 1441; but the duke did not even trust his son-in-law. The last six years of his life were spent in scheming to deprive Sforza of his lordships; and the war in the March, on which he employed Colleoni, had the object of ruining the principality acquired by this daring captain from Pope Eugenius IV. in 1443.

Colleoni was by no means deficient in those foxlike qualities which were necessary to save the lion from the toils spread for him by Italian intriguers. He had already shown that he knew

how to push his own interests, by changing sides and taking service with the highest bidder, as occasion prompted. Nor, though his character for probity and loyalty stood exceptionally high among the men of his profession, was he the slave to any questionable claims of honor or of duty. In that age of confused politics and extinguished patriotism, there was not indeed much scope for scrupulous honesty. But Filippo Maria Visconti proved more than a match for him in craft. While Colleoni was engaged in pacifying the revolted population of Bologna, the duke yielded to the suggestion of his parasites at Milan, who whispered that the general was becoming dangerously powerful. He recalled him, and threw him without trial into the dungeons of the Forni at Monza. Here Colleoni remained a prisoner more than a year, until the duke's death, in 1447, when he made his escape, and profited by the disturbance of the duchy to reacquire his lordships in the Bergamasque territory. The true motive for his imprisonment remains still buried in obscure conjecture. Probably it was not even known to the Visconti, who acted on this, as on so many other occasions, by a mere spasm of suspicious jealousy, for which he could have given no account.

From the year 1447 to the year 1455, it is difficult to follow Colleoni's movements, or to trace his policy. First, we find him employed by the Milanese Republic, during its brief space of independence; then he is engaged by the Venetians, with a commission for fifteen hundred horse; next, he is in the service of Francesco Sforza; once more in that of the Venetians, and yet again in that of the Duke of Milan. His biographer relates with pride that, during this period, he was three times successful against French troops in Piedmont and Lombardy. It appears that he made short engagements, and changed his paymasters according to convenience. But all this time he rose in personal importance, acquired fresh lordships in the Bergamasque, and ac-

cumulated wealth. He reached the highest point of his prosperity in 1455, when the Republic of St. Mark elected him general-in-chief of their armies, with the fullest powers, and with a stipend of one hundred thousand florins. For nearly twenty-one years, until the day of his death, in 1475, Colleoni held this honorable and lucrative office. In his will he charged the Signory of Venice that they should never again commit into the hands of a single captain such unlimited control over their military resources. It was indeed no slight tribute to Colleoni's reputation for integrity that the jealous republic, which had signified its sense of Carmagnola's untrustworthiness by capital punishment, should have left him so long in the undisturbed disposal of their army. The standard and the baton of St. Mark were conveyed to Colleoni by two ambassadors, and presented to him at Brescia on June 24, 1455. Three years later he made a triumphal entry into Venice, and received the same ensigns of military authority from the hands of the new doge, Pasquale Malipiero. On this occasion his staff consisted of some two hundred officers, splendidly armed, and followed by a train of serving-men. Noblemen from Bergamo, Brescia, and other cities of the Venetian territory, swelled the cortége. When they embarked on the lagoons, they found the water covered with boats and gondolas, bearing the population of Venice in gala attire to greet the illustrious guest with instruments of music. Three great galleys of the republic, called bucentaurs, issued from the crowd of smaller craft. On the first was the doge in his state robes, attended by the government in office, or the Signoria of St. Mark. On the second were members of the senate and minor magistrates. The third carried the ambassadors of foreign powers. Colleoni was received into the first state galley, and placed by the side of the doge. The oarsmen soon cleared the space between the land and Venice, passed the small canals, and swept majestically up the Canalozzo

among the plaudits of the crowds assembled on both sides to cheer their general. Thus they reached the piazzetta, where Colleoni alighted between the two great pillars, and, conducted by the doge in person, walked to the Church of St. Mark. Here, after mass had been said, and a sermon had been preached, kneeling before the high-altar he received the truncheon from the doge's hands. The words of his commission ran as follows :

"By authority and decree of this most excellent city of Venice, of us the prince, and of the senate, you are to be commander and captain-general of all our forces and armaments on *terra firma*. Take from our hands this truncheon, with good augury and fortune, as sign and warrant of your power. Be it your care and effort, with dignity and splendor to maintain and to defend the majesty, the loyalty, and the principles of this empire. Neither provoking, nor yet provoked, unless at our command, shall you break into open warfare with our enemies. Free jurisdiction and lordship over each one of our soldiers, except in cases of treason, we hereby commit to you."

After the ceremony of his reception, Colleoni was conducted with no less pomp to his lodgings, and the next ten days were spent in festivities of all sorts.

The commandership-in-chief of the Venetian forces was perhaps the highest military post in Italy. It placed Colleoni on the pinnacle of his profession, and made his camp the favorite school of young soldiers. Among his pupils or lieutenants we read of Ercole d' Este, the future Duke of Ferrara; Alessandro Sforza, Lord of Pesaro; Boniface, Marquis of Montferrat; Ciccio and Pino Ordelaifi, Princes of Forli; Astorre Manfredi, the Lord of Faenza; three Counts of Mirandola; two Princes of Carpi; Deifobo, the Count of Anguillara; Giovanni Antonio Caldora, Lord of Jesi in the March; and many others of less name. Honors came thick upon him. When one of the many ineffectual leagues against the infidel was formed in 1468, during the pontificate of Paul II., he was named captain-general for the crusade.

Pius II. designed him for the leader of the expedition he had planned against the impious and savage despot Sigismondo Malatesta. King René of Anjou, by special patent, authorized him to bear his name and arms, and made him a member of his family. The Duke of Burgundy, by a similar heraldic fiction, conferred upon him his name and armorial bearings. This will explain why Colleoni is often styled "*di Andegavia e Borgogna*." In the case of René, the honor was but a barren show. But the patent of Charles the Bold had more significance. In 1473 he entertained the project of employing the great Italian general against his Swiss foes; nor does it seem reasonable to reject a statement made by Colleoni's biographer, to the effect that a secret compact had been drawn up between him and the Duke of Burgundy, for the conquest and partition of the Duchy of Milan. The Venetians, in whose service Colleoni still remained, when they became aware of this project, met it with peaceful but irresistible opposition.

Colleoni had been engaged continually since his earliest boyhood in the trade of war. It was not therefore possible that he should have gained a great degree of literary culture. Yet the fashion of the times made it necessary that a man in his position should seek the society of scholars. Accordingly his court and camp were crowded with students, in whose wordy disputations he is said to have delighted. It will be remembered that his contemporaries, Alfonso the Magnanimous, Francesco Sforza, Federigo of Urbino, and Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, piqued themselves at least as much upon their patronage of letters as upon their prowess in the field.

Colleoni's court, like that of Urbino, was a model of manners. As became a soldier, he was temperate in food and moderate in slumber. It was recorded of him that he had never sat more than one hour at meat in his own house, and that he never overslept

the sunrise. After dinner he would converse with his friends, using commonly his native dialect of Bergamo, and entertaining the company now with stories of adventure, and now with pithy sayings. In another essential point he resembled his illustrious contemporary, the Duke of Urbino; for he was sincerely pious in an age which, however it preserved the decencies of ceremonial religion, was profoundly corrupt at heart. His principal lordships in the Bergamasque territory owed to his munificence their fairest churches and charitable institutions. At Martinengo, for example, he rebuilt and re-endowed two monasteries, the one dedicated to St. Chiara, the other to St. Francis. In Bergamo itself he founded an establishment named "*La Pietà*," for the good purpose of dowering and marrying poor girls. This house he endowed with a yearly income of three thousand ducats. The sulphur baths of Trescorio, at some distance from the city, were improved and opened to poor patients by a hospital which he provided. At Rumano he raised a church to St. Peter, and erected buildings of public utility, which on his death he bequeathed to the society of the *Misericordia* in that town. All the places of his jurisdiction owed to him such benefits as good water, new walls, and irrigation-works. In addition to these munificent foundations must be mentioned the Basella, or Monastery of Dominican friars, which he established not far from Bergamo, upon the river Serio, in memory of his beloved daughter Medea. Last, not least, was the Chapel of St. John the Baptist, attached to the Church of S. Maria Maggiore, which he endowed with fitting maintenance for two priests and deacons.

The one defect acknowledged by his biographer was his partiality for women. Early in life he married Tisbe, of the noble house of the Brescian Martinenghi, who bore him one daughter, Caterina, wedded to Gasparre Martinengo. Two illegitimate daughters, Ursina and Isotta, were recognized and treated by him as legiti-

mate. The first he gave in marriage to Gherardo Martinengo, and the second to Jacopo of the same family. Two other natural children, Doratina and Ricardona, were mentioned in his will: he left them four thousand ducats apiece for dowry. Medea, the child of his old age (for she was born to him when he was sixty), died before her father, and was buried, as we have seen, in the Chapel of Basella.

Throughout his life he was distinguished for great physical strength and agility. When he first joined the troop of Braccio, he could race, with his corselet on, against the swiftest runner of the army; and when he was stripped, few horses could beat him in speed. Far on into old age he was in the habit of taking long walks every morning for the sake of exercise, and delighted in feats of arms and jousting-matches. "He was tall, straight, and full of flesh, well-proportioned, and excellently made in all his limbs. His complexion inclined somewhat to brown, but was colored with sanguine and lively carnation. His eyes were black; in look and sharpness of light they were vivid, piercing, and terrible. The outlines of his nose and all his countenance expressed a certain manly nobleness, combined with goodness and prudence." Such is the portrait drawn of Colleoni by his biographer; and it well accords with the famous bronze statue of the general at Venice.

Colleoni lived with a magnificence that suited his rank. His favorite place of abode was Malpaga, a castle built by him at the distance of about an hour's drive from Bergamo. The place is worth a visit, though its courts and gates and galleries have now been turned into a monster farm, and the southern rooms, where Colleoni entertained his guests, are given over to the silkworms. Half a dozen families, employed upon a vast estate of the Martinengo family, occupy the still substantial house and stables. The moat is planted with mulberry-trees; the upper rooms are used as

granaries for golden maize; cows, pigs, and horses litter in the spacious yard. Yet the walls of the inner court and of the ancient state-rooms are brilliant with frescos, executed by some good Venetian hand, which represent the chief events of Colleoni's life—his battles, his reception by the Signory of Venice, his tournaments and hawking-parties, and the great series of entertainments with which he welcomed Christiern of Denmark. This king had made his pilgrimage to Rome, and was returning westward, when the fame of Colleoni and his princely state at Malpaga induced him to turn aside and spend some days as the general's guest. In order to do him honor, Colleoni left his castle at the king's disposal and established himself with all his staff and servants in a camp at some distance from Malpaga. The camp was duly furnished with tents and trenches, stockades, artillery, and all the other furniture of war. On the king's approach, Colleoni issued with trumpets blowing and banners flying to greet his guest, gratifying him thus with a spectacle of the pomp and circumstance of war as carried on in Italy. The visit was further enlivened by sham fights, feats of arms, and trials of strength. When it ended, Colleoni presented the king with one of his own suits of armor, and gave to each of his servants a complete livery of red and white, his colors. Among the frescos at Malpaga none are more interesting, and none, thanks to the silkworms rather than to any other cause, are fortunately in a better state of preservation, than those which represent this episode in the history of the castle.

Colleoni died in the year 1475, at the age of seventy-five. Since he left no male representative, he constituted the Republic of St. Mark his heir in chief, after properly providing for his daughters and his numerous foundations. The Venetians received under this testament a sum of one hundred thousand ducats, together with all arrears of pay due to him, and ten thousand

ducats owed him by the Duke of Ferrara. It set forth the testator's intention that this money should be employed in defence of the Christian faith against the Turk. One condition was attached to the bequest. The legatees were to erect a statue to Colleoni on the Piazza of St. Mark. This, however, involved some difficulty; for the proud republic had never accorded a similar honor, nor did they choose to encumber their splendid square with a monument. They evaded the condition by assigning the Campo in front of the Scuola di S. Marco, where also stands the Church of S. Zanipolo, to the purpose. Here accordingly the finest bronze equestrian statue in Italy, if we except the Marcus Aurelius of the Capitol, was reared upon its marble pedestal by Andrea Verocchio and Alessandro Leopardi.

Colleoni's liberal expenditure of wealth found its reward in the immortality conferred by art. While the names of Braccio, his master in the art of war, and of Piccinino, his great adversary, are familiar to few but professed students, no one who has visited either Bergamo or Venice can fail to have learned something about the founder of the Chapel of St. John and the original of Leopardi's bronze. The annals of sculpture assign to Verocchio, of Florence, the principal share in this statue: but Verocchio died before it was cast; and even granting that he designed the model, its execution must be attributed to his collaborator, the Venetian Leopardi. For my own part, I am loath to admit that the chief credit of this masterpiece belongs to a man whose undisputed work at Florence shows but little of its living spirit and splendor of suggested motion. That the Tuscan science of Verocchio secured conscientious modelling for man and horse may be assumed; but I am fain to believe that the concentrated fire which animates them both is due in no small measure to the handling of his northern fellow-craftsman.

While immersed in the dreary records of crimes, treasons, cru-

elties, and base ambitions, which constitute the bulk of fifteenth-century Italian history, it is refreshing to meet with a character so frank and manly, so simply pious and comparatively free from stain, as Colleoni. The only general of his day who can bear comparison with him for purity of public life and decency in conduct was Federigo di Montefeltro. Even here, the comparison redounds to Colleoni's credit; for he, unlike the Duke of Urbino, rose to eminence by his own exertion in a profession fraught with peril to men of ambition and energy. Federigo started with a principality sufficient to satisfy his just desires for power. Nothing but his own sense of right and prudence restrained Colleoni upon the path which brought Francesco Sforza to a duchy by dishonorable dealings, and Carmagnola to the scaffold by questionable practice against his masters.

COMO AND IL MEDEGHINO.

To which of the Italian lakes should the palm of beauty be accorded? This question may not unfrequently have moved the idle minds of travellers, wandering through that loveliest region from Orta to Garda—from little Orta, with her gem-like island, rosy granite crags, and chestnut-covered swards above the Colma, to Garda, bluest of all waters, surveyed in majestic length from Desenzano or poetic Sirmione, a silvery sleeping haze of hill and cloud and heaven and clear waves bathed in modulated azure. And between these extreme points what varied lovelinesses lie in broad Maggiore, winding Como, Varese with the laughing face upturned to heaven, Lugano overshadowed by the crested crags of Monte Generoso, and Iseo far withdrawn among the rocky Alps! He who loves immense space, cloud shadows slowly sailing over purple slopes, island gardens, distant glimpses of snow-capped mountains, breadth, air, immensity, and flooding sunlight, will choose Maggiore. But scarcely has he cast his vote for this, the Juno of the divine rivals, when he remembers the triple lovelinesses of the Larian Aphrodite, disclosed in all their placid grace from Villa Serbelloni—the green blue of the waters, clear as glass, opaque through depth; the *millefleurs* roses clambering into cypresses by Cadenabbia; the laburnums hanging their yellow clusters from the clefts of Sasso Rancio; the oleander arcades of Varenna; the wild white limestone crags of San Martino, which he has climbed to feast his eyes with the perspective, magical, serene, Leonardesquely perfect, of the distant gates of Adda. Then while this modern Paris is yet doubting, perhaps a thought may cross

his mind of sterner, solitary Lake Iseo—the Pallas of the three. She offers her own attractions. The sublimity of Monte Adamello, dominating Lovere and all the lowland like Hesiod's hill of Virtue reared aloft above the plain of common life, has charms to tempt heroic lovers. Nor can Varese be neglected. In some picturesque respects, Varese is the most perfect of the lakes. Those long lines of swelling hills that lead into the level yield an infinite series of placid foregrounds, pleasant to the eye by contrast with the dominant snow-summits, from Monte Viso to Monte Leone: the sky is limitless to southward; the low horizons are broken by bell-towers and farm-houses; while armaments of clouds are ever rolling in the interval of Alps and plain.

Of a truth, to decide which is the queen of the Italian lakes is but an *infinita questio*; and the mere raising of it is folly. Still each lover of the beautiful may give his vote; and mine, like that of shepherd Paris, is already given to the Larian goddess. Words fail in attempting to set forth charms which have to be enjoyed, or can at best but lightly be touched with most consummate tact, even as great poets have already touched on Como Lake—from Virgil with his “*Lari maxume*,” to Tennyson and the Italian Manzoni. The threshold of the shrine is, however, less consecrated ground; and the Cathedral of Como may form a vestibule to the temple where silence is more golden than the speech of a describer.

The Cathedral of Como is perhaps the most perfect building in Italy for illustrating the fusion of Gothic and Renaissance styles, both of a good type and exquisite in their sobriety. The Gothic ends with the nave. The noble transepts and the choir, each terminating in a rounded tribune of the same dimensions, are carried out in a simple and decorous Bramantesque manner. The transition from the one style to the other is managed so felicitously, and the sympathies between them are so well developed,

that there is no discord. What we here call Gothic is conceived in a truly Southern spirit, without fantastic efflorescence or imaginative complexity of multiplied parts; while the Renaissance manner, as applied by Tommaso Rodari, has not yet stiffened into the lifeless Neo-Latinism of the later Cinque Cento, it is still distinguished by delicate inventiveness and beautiful subordination of decorative detail to architectural effect. Under these happy conditions we feel that the Gothic of the nave, with its superior severity and sombreness, dilates into the lucid harmonies of choir and transepts like a flower unfolding. In the one the mind is tuned to inner meditation and religious awe; in the other the worshipper passes into a temple of the clear explicit faith—as an initiated neophyte might be received into the meaning of the mysteries.

After the collapse of the Roman Empire, the district of Como seems to have maintained more vividly than the rest of Northern Italy some memory of classic art. *Magistri Comacini* is a title frequently inscribed upon deeds and charters of the earlier Middle Ages, as synonymous with sculptors and architects. This fact may help to account for the purity and beauty of the Duomo. It is the work of a race in which the tradition of delicate artistic invention had never been wholly interrupted. To Tommaso Rodari and his brothers, Bernardino and Jacopo, the world owes this sympathetic fusion of the Gothic and the Bramantesque styles; and theirs too is the sculpture with which the Duomo is so richly decorated. They were natives of Maroggia, a village near Mendrisio, beneath the crests of Monte Generoso, close to Campione, which sent so many able craftsmen out into the world between the years 1300 and 1500. Indeed the name of Campionesi would probably have been given to the Rodari, had they left their native province for service in Eastern Lombardy. The body of the Duomo had been finished when Tommaso Rodari

was appointed master of the fabric in 1487. To complete the work by the addition of a tribune was his duty. He prepared a wooden model and exposed it, after the fashion of those times, for criticism in his *bottega*; and the usual difference of opinion arose among the citizens of Como concerning its merits. Cristoforo Solaro, surnamed Il Gobbo, was called in to advise. It may be remembered that when Michael Angelo first placed his *Pietà* in St. Peter's, rumor gave it to this celebrated Lombard sculptor, and the Florentine was constrained to set his own signature upon the marble. The same Solaro carved the monument of Beatrice Sforza in the Certosa of Pavia. He was indeed in all points competent to criticise or to confirm the design of his fellow-craftsman. Il Gobbo disapproved of the proportions chosen by Rodari, and ordered a new model to be made; but after much discussion, and some concessions on the part of Rodari, who is said to have increased the number of the windows and lightened the orders of his model, the work was finally intrusted to the master of Maroggia.

Not less creditable than the general design of the tribune is the sculpture executed by the brothers. The north side door is a master-work of early Renaissance chiselling, combining mixed Christian and classical motives with a wealth of floral ornament. Inside, over the same door, is a procession of children seeming to represent the Triumph of Bacchus, with perhaps some Christian symbolism. Opposite, above the south door, is a frieze of fighting Tritons—horsed sea deities pounding one another with bunches of fish and splashing the water, in Mantegna's spirit. The doorways of the façade are decorated with the same rare workmanship; and the canopies, supported by naked fauns and slender twisted figures, under which the two Plinies are seated, may be reckoned among the supreme achievements of delicate Renaissance sculpture. The Plinies are not like the work of the same master.

They are older, stiffer, and more Gothic. The chief interest attaching to them is that they are habited and seated after the fashion of Humanists. This consecration of the two pagan saints beside the portals of the Christian temple is truly characteristic of the fifteenth century in Italy. Beneath are little bass-reliefs representing scenes from their respective lives, in the style of carved predellas on the altars of saints.

The whole church is peopled with detached statues, among which a Sebastian in the Chapel of the Madonna must be mentioned as singularly beautiful. It is a finely modelled figure, with the full life and exuberant adolescence of Venetian inspiration. A peculiar feature of the external architecture is the series of Atlantes, bearing on their shoulders urns, heads of lions, and other devices, and standing on brackets round the upper cornice just below the roof. They are of all sorts: young and old, male and female; classically nude and boldly outlined. These water-conduits, the work of Bernardo Bianco and Francesco Rusca, illustrate the departure of the earlier Renaissance from the Gothic style. They are gargoyles; but they have lost the grotesque element. At the same time the sculptor, while discarding Gothic tradition, has not betaken himself yet to a servile imitation of the antique. He has used invention, and substituted for grinning dragons' heads something wild and bizarre of his own in harmony with classic taste.

The pictures in the chapels, chiefly by Luini and Ferrari—an idyllic Nativity, with faun-like shepherds and choirs of angels—a sumptuous adoration of the Magi—a jewelled Sposalizio with abundance of golden hair flowing over draperies of green and crimson—will interest those who are as yet unfamiliar with Lombard painting. Yet their architectural setting, perhaps, is superior to their intrinsic merit as works of art; and their chief value consists in adding rare dim flakes of color to the cool light of the

lovely church. More curious, because less easily matched, is the gilded wood-work above the altar of S. Abondio, attributed to a German carver, but executed, for the most part, in the purest Luinesque manner. The pose of the enthroned Madonna, the type and gesture of St. Catherine, and the treatment of the Pietà above, are thoroughly Lombard, showing how Luini's ideal of beauty could be expressed in carving. Some of the choicest figures in the Monastero Maggiore at Milan seem to have descended from the walls and stepped into their tabernacles on this altar. Yet the style is not maintained consistently. In the reliefs illustrating the life of S. Abondio, we miss Luini's childlike grace, and find instead a something that reminds us of Donatello—a seeking after the classical in dress, carriage, and grouping of accessory figures. It may have been that the carver, recognizing Luini's defective composition, and finding nothing in that master's manner adapted to the spirit of relief, had the good taste to render what was Luinesquely lovely in his female figures, and to fall back on a severer model for his bass-reliefs.

The building-fund for the Duomo was raised in Como and its districts. Boxes were placed in all the churches to receive the alms of those who wished to aid the work. The clergy begged in Lent, and preached the duty of contributing on special days. Presents of lime and bricks and other materials were thankfully received. Bishops, canons, and municipal magistrates were expected to make costly gifts on taking office. Notaries, under penalty of paying one hundred soldi if they neglected their engagement, were obliged to persuade testators, *cum bonis modis dulciter*, to inscribe the Duomo on their wills. Fines for various offences were voted to the building by the city. Each new burgher paid a certain sum; while guilds and farmers of the taxes bought monopolies and privileges at the price of yearly subsidies. A lottery was finally established for the benefit of the fabric. Of course

each payment to the good work carried with it spiritual privileges ; and so willingly did the people respond to the call of the Church, that during the sixteenth century the sums subscribed amounted to two hundred thousand golden crowns. Among the most munificent donators are mentioned the Marchese Giacomo Gallio, who bequeathed two hundred and ninety thousand lire, and a Benzi, who gave ten thousand ducats.

While the people of Como were thus straining every nerve to complete a pious work, which, at the same time, is one of the most perfect masterpieces of Italian art, their lovely lake was turned into a pirate's stronghold, and its green waves stained with slaughter of conflicting navies. So curious is this episode in the history of the Larian lake that it is worth while to treat of it at some length. Moreover, the lives of few captains of adventure offer matter more rich in picturesque details and more illustrative of their times than that of Gian Giacomo de' Medici, the Larian corsair, long known and still remembered as *Il Medeghino*. He was born in Milan in 1498, at the beginning of that darkest and most disastrous period of Italian history, when the old fabric of social and political existence went to ruin under the impact of conflicting foreign armies. He lived on until the year 1555, witnessing and taking part in the dismemberment of the Milanese duchy, playing a game of hazard at high stakes for his own profit with the two last Sforzas, the Empire, the French, and the Swiss. At the beginning of the century, while he was still a youth, the rich valley of the Valtelline, with Bormio and Chiavenna, had been assigned to the Grisons. The Swiss cantons, at the same time, had possessed themselves of Lugano and Bellinzona. By these two acts of robbery the mountaineers tore a portion of its fairest territory from the duchy ; and whoever ruled in Milan, whether a Sforza, or a Spanish viceroy, or a French general, was impatient to recover the lost jewel of the ducal crown. So much has to be

premised, because the scene of our hero's romantic adventures was laid upon the borderland between the duchy and the cantons. Intriguing at one time with the Duke of Milan, at another with his foes the French or Spaniards, Il Medeghino found free scope for his peculiar genius in a guerilla warfare, carried on with the avowed purpose of restoring the Valtelline to Milan. To steer a plain course through that chaos of politics, in which the modern student, aided by the calm clear lights of history and meditation, cannot find a clew, was, of course, impossible for an adventurer whose one aim was to gratify his passions and exalt himself at the expense of others. It is, therefore, of little use to seek motives of state-craft or of patriotism in the conduct of Il Medeghino. He was a man shaped according to Machiavelli's standard of political morality—self-reliant, using craft and force with cold indifference to moral ends, bent only upon wringing for himself the largest share of this world's power from men who, like himself, identified virtue with unflinching and immitigable egotism.

Il Medeghino's father was Bernardo de' Medici, a Lombard, who neither claimed nor could have proved cousinship with the great Medicean family of Florence. His mother was Cecilia Serbelloni. The boy was educated in the fashionable humanistic studies, nourishing his young imagination with the tales of Roman heroes. The first exploit by which he proved his *virtù* was the murder of a man he hated, at the age of sixteen. This "virile act of vengeance," as it was called, brought him into trouble, and forced him to choose the congenial profession of arms. At a time when violence and vigor passed for manliness, a spirited assassination formed the best of introductions to the captains of mixed mercenary troops. Il Medeghino rose in favor with his generals, helped to reinstate Francesco Sforza in his capital, and, returning himself to Milan, inflicted severe vengeance on the enemies who had driven him to exile. It was his ambition, at this

early period of his life, to be made governor of the Castle of Musso, on the Lake of Como. While fighting in the neighborhood, he had observed the unrivalled capacities for defence presented by its site; and some prevision of his future destinies now urged him to acquire it, as the basis for the free marauding life he planned. The headland of Musso lies about half-way between Gravedona and Menaggio, on the right shore of the Lake of Como. Planted on a pedestal of rock and surmounted by a sheer cliff, there then stood a very ancient tower, commanding this promontory on the side of the land. Between it and the water the Visconti, in more recent days, had built a square fort; and the headland had been further strengthened by the addition of connecting walls and bastions pierced for cannon. Combining precipitous cliffs, strong towers, and easy access from the lake below, this fortress of Musso was exactly the fit station for a pirate. So long as he kept the command of the lake, he had little to fear from land attacks, and had a splendid basis for aggressive operations. Il Medeghino made his request to the Duke of Milan; but the foxlike Sforza would not grant him a plain answer. At length he hinted that if his suitor chose to rid him of a troublesome subject, the noble and popular Astorre Visconti, he should receive Musso for payment. Crimes of bloodshed and treason sat lightly on the adventurer's conscience. In a short time he compassed the young Visconti's death, and claimed his reward. The duke despatched him thereupon to Musso, with open letters to the governor, commanding him to yield the castle to the bearer. Private advice, also intrusted to Il Medeghino, bade the governor, on the contrary, cut the bearer's throat. The young man, who had the sense to read the duke's letter, destroyed the secret document and presented the other, or, as one version of the story goes, forged a ducal order in his own favor.* At any rate, the castle was placed in

* I cannot see clearly through these transactions, the muddy waters of de-

his hands ; and affecting to know nothing of the duke's intended treachery, Il Medeghino took possession of it as a trusted servant of the ducal crown.

As soon as he was settled in his castle, the freebooter devoted all his energies to rendering it still more impregnable by strengthening the walls and breaking the cliffs into more horrid precipices. In this work he was assisted by his numerous friends and followers ; for Musso rapidly became, like ancient Rome, an asylum for the ruffians and outlaws of neighboring provinces. It is even said that his sisters, Clarina and Margherita, rendered efficient aid with manual labor. The mention of Clarina's name justifies a parenthetical side-glance at Il Medeghino's pedigree, which will serve to illustrate the exceptional conditions of Italian society during this age. She was married to the Count Giberto Borromeo, and became the mother of the pious Carlo Borromeo, whose shrine is still adored at Milan in the Duomo. Il Medeghino's brother, Giovan Angelo, rose to the papacy, assuming the title of Pius IV. Thus, this murderous marauder was the brother of a pope and the uncle of a saint ; and these three persons of one family embraced the various degrees and typified the several characters which flourished with peculiar lustre in Renaissance Italy—the captain of adventure soaked in blood, the churchman unrivalled for intrigue, and the saint aflame with holiest enthusiasm. Il Medeghino was short of stature, but well made and powerful ; broad-chested ; with a penetrating voice and winning countenance. He dressed simply, like one of his own soldiers ; slept but little ; was insensible to carnal pleasure ; and though he knew how to win the affection of his men by jovial speech, he maintained strict discipline in his little army. In all points he was an ideal bandit chief, never happy unless fighting or planning cadent Italian plot and counterplot being inscrutable to senses assisted by nothing more luminous than mere tradition.

campaigns, inflexible of purpose, bold and cunning in the execution of his schemes, cruel to his enemies, generous to his followers, sacrificing all considerations, human and divine, to the one aim of his life—self-aggrandizement by force and intrigue. He knew well how to make himself both feared and respected. One instance of his dealing will suffice. A gentleman of Bellano, Polidoro Boldoni, in return to his advances, coldly replied that he cared for neither amity nor relationship with thieves and robbers; whereupon Il Medeghino extirpated his family almost to a man.

Soon after his settlement in Musso, Il Medeghino, wishing to secure the gratitude of the duke, his master, began war with the Grisons. From Coire, from the Engadine, and from Davos the Alpine pikemen were now pouring down to swell the troops of Francis I.; and their road lay through the Lake of Como. Il Medeghino burned all the boats upon the lake, except those which he took into his own service, and thus made himself master of the water passage. He then swept the “length of lordly Lario” from Colico to Lecco, harrying the villages upon the shore, and cutting off the bands of journeying Switzers at his pleasure. Not content with this guerilla, he made a descent upon the territory of the Trepievi, and pushed far up towards Chiavenna, forcing the Grisons to recall their troops from the Milanese. These acts of prowess convinced the duke that he had found a strong ally in the pirate chief. When Francis I. continued his attacks upon the duchy, and the Grisons still adhered to their French paymaster, the Sforza formally invested Gian Giacomo de’ Medici with the perpetual governorship of Musso, the Lake of Como, and as much as he could wrest from the Grisons above the lake. Furnished now with a just title for his depredations, Il Medeghino undertook the siege of Chiavenna. The town is the key to the valleys of the Splügen and Bregaglia. Strongly fortified and well situ-

ated for defence, the burghers of the Grisons well knew that upon its possession depended their power in the Italian valleys. To take it by assault was impossible. Il Medeghino used craft, entered the castle, and soon had the city at his disposition. Nor did he lose time in sweeping Val Bregaglia. The news of this conquest recalled the Switzers from the duchy ; and as they hurried homeward just before the battle of Pavia, it may be affirmed that Gian Giacomo de' Medici was instrumental in the defeat and capture of the French king. The mountaineers had no great difficulty in dislodging their pirate enemy from Chiavenna, the Valtelline, and Val Bregaglia. But he retained his hold on the Trepievi, occupied the Valsassina, took Porlezza, and established himself still more strongly in Musso as the corsair monarch of the lake.

The tyranny of the Sforzas in Milan was fast going to pieces between France and Spain ; and in 1526 the Marquis of Pescara occupied the capital in the name of Charles V. The duke, meanwhile, remained a prisoner in his castello. Il Medeghino was now without a master ; for he refused to acknowledge the Spaniards, preferring to watch events and build his own power on the ruins of the dukedom. At the head of four thousand men, recruited from the lakes and neighboring valleys, he swept the country far and wide, and occupied the rich champaign of the Brianza. He was now lord of the lakes of Como and Lugano, and absolute in Lecco and the adjoining valleys. The town of Como itself alone belonged to the Spaniards ; and even Como was blockaded by the navy of the corsair. Il Medeghino had a force of seven big ships, with three sails and forty-eight oars, bristling with guns and carrying marines. His flag-ship was a large brigantine, manned by picked rowers, from the mast of which floated the red banner with the golden *palle* of the Medicean arms. Besides these larger vessels, he commanded a flotilla of countless small

boats. It is clear that to reckon with him was a necessity. If he could not be put down with force, he might be bought over by concessions. The Spaniards adopted the second course, and Il Medeghino, judging that the cause of the Sforza family was desperate, determined in 1528 to attach himself to the Empire. Charles V. invested him with the Castle of Musso and the larger part of Como lake, including the town of Lecco. He now assumed the titles of Marquis of Musso and Count of Lecco; and in order to prove his sovereignty before the world, he coined money with his own name and devices.

It will be observed that Gian Giacomo de' Medici had hitherto acted with a single-hearted view to his own interests. At the age of thirty he had raised himself from nothing to a principality, which, though petty, might compare with many of some name in Italy—with Carpi, for example, or Mirandola, or Camerino. Nor did he mean to remain quiet in the prime of life. He regarded Como lake as the mere basis for more arduous undertakings. Therefore, when the whirligig of events restored Francesco Sforza to his duchy in 1529, Il Medeghino refused to obey his old lord. Pretending to move under the duke's orders, but really acting for himself alone, he proceeded to attack his ancient enemies, the Grisons. By fraud and force he worked his way into their territory, seized Morbegno, and overran the Valtelline. He was destined, however, to receive a serious check. Twelve thousand Switzers rose against him on the one hand, on the other the Duke of Milan sent a force by land and water to subdue his rebel subject, while Alessandro Gonzaga marched upon his castles in the Brianza. He was thus assailed by formidable forces from three quarters, converging upon the Lake of Como, and driving him to his chosen element, the water. Hastily quitting the Valtelline, he fell back to the Castle of Mandello on the lake, collected his navy, and engaged the ducal ships in a battle off Menaggio.

In this battle he was worsted. But he did not lose his courage. From Bellagio, from Varenna, from Bellano, he drove forth his enemies, rolled the cannon of the Switzers into the lake, regained Lecco, defeated the troops of Alessandro Gonzaga, and took the Duke of Mantua prisoner. Had he but held Como, it is probable that he might have obtained such terms at this time as would have consolidated his tyranny. The town of Como, however, now belonged to the Duke of Milan, and formed an excellent basis for operations against the pirate. Overmatched, with an exhausted treasury and broken forces, Il Medeghino was at last compelled to give in. Yet he retired with all the honors of war. In exchange for Musso and the lake, the duke agreed to give him thirty-five thousand golden crowns, together with the feud and marquisate of Marignano. A free pardon was promised not only to himself and his brothers, but to all his followers ; and the duke further undertook to transport his artillery and munitions of war at his own expense to Marignano. Having concluded this treaty under the auspices of Charles V. and his lieutenant, Il Medeghino, in March, 1532, set sail from Musso, and turned his back upon the lake forever. The Switzers immediately destroyed the towers, forts, walls, and bastions of the Musso promontory, leaving in the midst of their ruins the little chapel of S. Eufemia.

Gian Giacomo de' Medici, henceforth known to Europe as the Marquis of Marignano, now took service under Spain ; and through the favor of Anton de Leyva, viceroy for the duchy, rose to the rank of field-marshal. When the Marquis del Vasto succeeded to the Spanish governorship of Milan in 1536, he determined to gratify an old grudge against the ex-pirate, and, having invited him to a banquet, made him prisoner. Il Medeghino was not, however, destined to languish in a dungeon. Princes and kings interested themselves in his fate. He was released, and journeyed to the court of Charles V. in Spain. The emperor received him

kindly, and employed him first in the Low Countries, where he helped to repress the burghers of Ghent, and at the siege of Landrecy commanded the Spanish artillery against other Italian captains of adventure; for, Italy being now dismembered and enslaved, her sons sought foreign service where they found best pay and widest scope for martial science. Afterwards the Medici ruled Bohemia as Spanish viceroy; and then, as general of the league formed by the Duke of Florence, the emperor, and the pope to repress the liberties of Tuscany, distinguished himself in that cruel war of extermination which turned the fair Contado of Siena into a poisonous Maremma. To the last Il Medeghino preserved the instincts and the passions of a brigand chief. It was at this time that, acting for the Grand-Duke of Tuscany, he first claimed open kinship with the Medici of Florence. Heralds and genealogists produced a pedigree which seemed to authorize this pretension; he was recognized, together with his brother, Pius IV., as an offshoot of the great house which had already given dukes to Florence, kings to France, and two popes to the Christian world. In the midst of all this foreign service he never forgot his old dream of conquering the Valtelline; and in 1547 he made proposals to the emperor for a new campaign against the Grisons. Charles V. did not choose to engage in a war the profits of which would have been inconsiderable for the master of half the civilized world, and which might have proved troublesome by stirring up the tameless Switzers. Il Medeghino was obliged to abandon a project cherished from the earliest dawn of his adventurous manhood.

When Gian Giacomo died, in 1555, his brother Battista succeeded to his claims upon Lecco and the Trepievi. His monument, magnificent with five bronze figures, the masterpiece of Leone Lioni, from Menaggio, Michaelangellesque in style, and of consummate workmanship, still adorns the Duomo of Milan. It stands

close by the door that leads to the roof. This mausoleum, erected to the memory of Gian Giacomo and his brother Gabrio, is said to have cost 7800 golden crowns. On the occasion of the pirate's funeral the Senate of Milan put on mourning, and the whole city followed the great robber, the hero of Renaissance *virtù*, to the grave.

Between the Cathedral of Como and the corsair Medeghino there is but a slight link. Yet so extraordinary were the social circumstances of Renaissance Italy that almost at every turn, on her seaboard, in her cities, from her hill-tops, we are compelled to blend our admiration for the loveliest and purest works of art amid the choicest scenes of nature with memories of execrable crimes and lawless characters. Sometimes, as at Perugia, the *nexus* is but local. At others, one single figure, like that of Cellini, unites both points of view in a romance of unparalleled dramatic vividness. Or, again, beneath the vaults of the Certosa, near Pavia, a masterpiece of the serenest beauty carries our thoughts perforce back to the hideous cruelties and snake-like frauds of its despotie founder. This is the excuse for combining two such diverse subjects in one study.

LOMBARD VIGNETTES.

ON THE SUPERGA.

THIS is the chord of Lombard coloring in May: Lowest in the scale, bright green of varied tints, the meadow-grasses mingling with willows and acacias, harmonized by air and distance; next, opaque blue—the blue of something between amethyst and lapis-lazuli—that belongs alone to the basements of Italian mountains; higher, the roseate whiteness of ridged snow on Alps or Apennines; highest, the blue of the sky, ascending from pale turquoise to transparent sapphire filled with light. A mediæval mystic might have likened this chord to the spiritual world. For the lowest region is that of natural life, of plant and bird and beast, and unregenerate man. It is the place of faun and nymph and satyr, the plain where wars are fought and cities built and work is done. Thence we climb to purified humanity, the mountains of purgation, the solitude and simplicity of contemplative life not yet made perfect by freedom from the flesh. Higher comes that thin white belt, where are the resting-places of angelic feet, the points whence purged souls take their flight towards infinity. Above all is heaven, the hierarchies ascending row on row to reach the light of God.

This fancy occurred to me as I climbed the slope of the Superga, gazing over acacia hedges and poplars to the mountains bare in morning light. The occasional occurrence of bars across this chord—poplars shivering in sun and breeze, stationary cypresses as black as night, and tall campanili with the hot red shafts of

glowing brick—adds just enough of composition to the landscape. Without too much straining of the allegory, the mystic might have recognized in these aspiring bars the upward effort of souls rooted in the common life of earth.

The panorama, unrolling as we ascend, is enough to overpower a lover of beauty. There is nothing equal to it for space and breadth and majesty. Monte Rosa, the masses of Mont Blanc blended with the Grand Paradis, the airy pyramid of Monte Viso, these are the battlements of that vast Alpine rampart in which the vale of Susa opens like a gate. To west and south sweep the Maritime Alps and the Apennines. Beneath glides the infant Po; and where he leads our eyes the plain is only limited by pearly mist.

A BRONZE BUST OF CALIGULA AT TURIN.

The Albertina bronze is one of the most precious portraits of antiquity, not merely because it confirms the testimony of the green basalt bust in the Capitol, but also because it supplies an even more emphatic and impressive illustration to the narrative of Suetonius.

Caligula is here represented as young and singularly beautiful. It is indeed an ideal Roman head, with the powerful square modelling, the crisp short hair, low forehead, and regular firm features proper to the noblest Roman type. The head is thrown backward from the throat; and there is a something of menace or defiance or suffering in the suggestion of brusque movement given to the sinews of the neck. This attitude, together with the tension of the forehead and the fixed expression of pain and strain communicated by the lines of the mouth—strong muscles of the upper lip and abruptly chiselled under lip—in relation to the small eyes, deep set beneath their cavernous and level brows, renders the whole face a monument of spiritual anguish. I remem-

ber that the green basalt bust of the Capitol has the same anxious forehead, the same troubled and overburdened eyes; but the agony of this fretful mouth, comparable to nothing but the mouth of Pandolfo Sigismondo Malatesta, and, like that, on the verge of breaking into the spasms of delirium, is quite peculiar to the Albertina bronze. It is just this which the portrait of the Capitol lacks for the completion of Caligula. The man who could be so represented in art had nothing wholly vulgar in him. The brutality of Caracalla, the overblown sensuality of Nero, the effeminacy of Commodus or Heliogabalus are all absent here. This face idealizes the torture of a morbid soul. It is withal so truly beautiful that it might easily be made the poem of high suffering or noble passion. If the bronze were plastic I see how a great sculptor by but few strokes could convert it into an agonizing Stephen or Sebastian. As it is, the unimaginable touch of disease, the unrest of madness, made Caligula the genius of insatiable appetite; and his martyrdom was the torment of lust and ennui and everlasting agitation. The accident of empire tautalized him with vain hopes of satisfying the Charybdis of his soul's sick cravings. From point to point he passed of empty pleasure and unsatisfying cruelty, forever hungry; until the malady of his spirit, unrestrained by any limitations, and with the right medium for its development, became unique—the tragic type of pathological desire. What more than all things must have plagued a man with that face was probably the unavoidable meanness of his career. When we study the chapters of Suetonius we are forced to feel that, though the situation and the madness of Caligula were dramatically impressive, his crimes were trivial and small. In spite of the vast scale on which he worked his devilish will, his life presents a total picture of sordid vice, differing only from pothouse dissipation and school-boy cruelty in point of size. And this of a truth is the Nemesis of evil. After a time, mere tyrannous caprice must

become commonplace and cloying, tedious to the tyrant and uninteresting to the student of humanity; nor can I believe that Caligula failed to perceive this to his own infinite disgust.

Suetonius asserts that he was hideously ugly. How are we to square this testimony with the witness of the bronze before us? What changed the face, so beautiful and terrible in youth, to ugliness that shrank from sight in manhood? Did the murderers find it blurred in its fine lineaments, furrowed with lines of care, hollowed with the soul's hunger? Unless a life of vice and madness had succeeded in making Caligula's face what the faces of some maniacs are—the bloated ruin of what was once a living witness to the soul within—I could fancy that death may have sanctified it with even more beauty than this bust of the self-tormented young man shows. Have we not all seen the anguish of thought-fretted faces smoothed out by the hands of the Deliverer?

FERRARI AT VERCELLI.

It is possible that many visitors to the Cathedral of Como have carried away the memory of stately women with abundant yellow hair and draperies of green and crimson in a picture they connect thereafter with Gaudenzio Ferrari. And when they come to Milan they are probably both impressed and disappointed by a Martyrdom of St. Catherine in the Brera, bearing the same artist's name. If they wish to understand this painter they must seek him at Varallo, at Saronno, and at Vercelli. In the Church of S. Cristoforo, in Vercelli, Gaudenzio Ferrari, at the full height of his powers, showed what he could do to justify Lomazzo's title chosen for him of the eagle. He has indeed the strong wing and the swiftness of the king of birds. And yet the works of few really great painters—and among the really great we place Ferrari—leave upon the mind a more distressing sense of imperfection. Extraordinary fertility of fancy, vehement dramatic passion, sin-

cere study of nature, and great command of technical resources are here (as elsewhere in Ferrari's frescos) neutralized by an incurable defect of the combining and harmonizing faculty so essential to a masterpiece. There is stuff enough of thought and vigor and imagination to make a dozen artists. And yet we turn away disappointed from the crowded, dazzling, stupefying wilderness of forms and faces on these mighty walls.

All that Ferrari derived from actual life—the heads of single figures, the powerful movement of men and women in excited action, the monumental pose of two praying nuns—is admirably rendered. His angels, too, in *S. Cristoforo*, as elsewhere, are quite original; not only in their type of beauty, which is terrestrial and peculiar to Ferrari, without a touch of Correggio's sensuality; but also in the intensity of their emotion, the realization of their vitality. Those which hover round the Cross in the fresco of the "Crucifixion" are as passionate as any angels of the Giottesque masters in *Assisi*. Those, again, which crowd the Stable of Bethlehem in the "Nativity" yield no point of idyllic charm to Gozzoli's in the *Riccardi Chapel*.

The "Crucifixion" and the "Assumption of Madonna" are very tall and narrow compositions, audacious in their attempt to fill almost unmanageable space with a connected action. Of the two frescos, the "Crucifixion," which has points of strong similarity to the same subject at *Varallo*, is by far the best. Ferrari never painted anything at once truer to life and nobler in tragic style than the fainting Virgin. Her face expresses the very acme of martyrdom—not exaggerated nor spasmodic, but real and sublime—in the suffering of a stately matron. In points like this Ferrari cannot be surpassed. Raphael could scarcely have done better; besides, there is an air of sincerity, a stamp of popular truth in this episode which lies beyond Raphael's sphere. It reminds us rather of *Tintoretto*.

After the "Crucifixion," I place the "Adoration of the Magi," full of fine mundane motives and gorgeous costumes; then the "Sposalizio" (whose marriage I am not certain), the only grandly composed picture of the series, and marked by noble heads; then the "Adoration of the Shepherds," with two lovely angels holding the bambino. The "Assumption of the Magdalen"—for which fresco there is a valuable cartoon in the Albertina Collection at Turin—must have been a fine picture; but it is ruined now. An oil altar-piece, in the choir of the same church, struck me less than the frescos. It represents Madonna and a crowd of saints under an orchard of apple-trees, with cherubs curiously flung about almost at random in the air. The motive of the orchard is prettily conceived and carried out with spirit.

What Ferrari possessed was rapidity of movement, fulness and richness of reality, exuberance of invention, excellent portraiture, dramatic vehemence, and an almost unrivalled sympathy with the swift and passionate world of angels. What he lacked was power of composition, simplicity of total effect, harmony in coloring, control over his own luxuriance, the sense of tranquillity. He seems to have sought grandeur in size and multitude, richness, éclat, contrast. Being the disciple of Leonardo and Raphael, his defects are truly singular. As a composer, the old leaven of Giovenone remained in him; but he felt the dramatic tendencies of a later age, and in occasional episodes he realized them with a force and *furia* granted to very few of the Italian painters.

LANINI AT VERCELLI.

The Casa Mariano is a palace which belonged to a family of that name. Like many houses of the sort in Italy, it fell to vile uses, and its hall of audience was turned into a lumber-room. The Operai of Vercelli, I was told, bought the palace a few years ago, restored the noble hall, and devoted a smaller room to a col-

lection of pictures valuable for students of the early Vercellese style of painting. Of these there is no need to speak. The great hall is the gem of the Casa Mariano. It has a coved roof, with a large, flat, oblong space in the centre of the ceiling. The whole of this vault and the lunettes beneath were painted by Lanini; so runs the tradition of the fresco-painter's name; and though much injured by centuries of outrage, and somewhat marred by recent restoration, these frescos form a precious monument of Lombard art. The object of the painter's design seems to have been the glorification of Music. In the central compartment of the roof is an assembly of the gods, obviously borrowed from Raphael's "Marriage of Cupid and Psyche" in the Farnesina at Rome. The fusion of Roman composition with Lombard execution constitutes the chief charm of this singular work, and makes it, so far as I am aware, unique. Single figures of the goddesses, and the whole movement of the scene upon Olympus, are transcribed without attempt at concealment. And yet the fresco is not a bare-faced copy. The manner of feeling and of execution is quite different from that of Raphael's school. The poetry and sentiment are genuinely Lombard. None of Raphael's pupils could have carried out his design with a delicacy of emotion and a technical skill in coloring so consummate. What, we think, as we gaze upward, would the master have given for such a craftsman? The hardness, coarseness, and animal crudity of the Roman school are absent; so also is their vigor. But where the grace of form and color is so soft and sweet, where the high-bred calm of good company is so sympathetically rendered, where the atmosphere of amorous languor and of melody is so artistically diffused, we cannot miss the powerful modelling and rather vulgar *tours de force* of Giulio Romano. The scale of tone is silvery golden. There are no hard blues, no coarse red flesh-tints, no black shadows. Mellow lights, the morning hues of primrose or of palest amber,

pervade the whole society. It is a court of gentle and harmonious souls; and though this style of beauty might cloy, at first sight there is something ravishing in those yellow-haired, white-limbed, blooming deities. No movement of lascivious grace as in Correggio, no perturbation of the senses, as in some of the Venetians, disturbs the rhythm of their music; nor is the pleasure of the flesh, though felt by the painter and communicated to the spectator, an interruption to their divine calm. The white, saffron-haired goddesses are grouped together like stars seen in the topaz light of evening, like daffodils half smothered in snow-drops, and among them Diana, with the crescent on her forehead, is the fairest. Her dream-like beauty need fear no comparison with the Diana of the Camera di S. Paolo. Apollo and Bacchus are scarcely less lovely in their bloom of earliest manhood; honey-pale, as Greeks would say; like statues of living electron; realizing Simætha's picture of her lover and his friend:

τοῖς δ' ἦν ξανθοτέρα μὲν ἐλιχρύσοιο γενειάς,
στήθεα δὲ στίλβοντα πολὺ πλεόν ἢ τὸ Σελάννα.*

It was thus that the almost childlike spirit of the Milanese painters felt the antique; how differently from their Roman brethren! It was thus that they interpreted the lines of their own poets:

E i tuoi capei più volte ho somigliati
Di Cerere a le paglie secche o bionde
Dintorno crespi al tuo capo legati.†

Yet the painter of this hall—whether we are to call him Lanini or another—was not a composer. Where he has not robbed the motives and the distribution of the figures from Raphael, he has noth-

* The down upon their cheeks and chin was yellower than helichrysus, and their breasts gleamed whiter far than thou, O Moon.

† Thy tresses have I oftentimes compared to Ceres' yellow autumn sheaves, wreathed in curled bands around thy head.

ing left but grace of detail. The intellectual feebleness of his style may be seen in many figures of women playing upon instruments of music, ranged around the walls. One girl at the organ is graceful; another with a tambourine has a sort of Bassarid beauty. But the group of Apollo, Pegasus, and a Muse upon Parnassus is a failure in its meaningless frigidity, while few of these subordinate compositions show power of conception or vigor of design.

Lanini, like Sodoma, was a native of Vercelli; and though he was Ferrari's pupil, there is more in him of Luini or of Sodoma than of his master. He does not rise at any point to the height of these three great masters, but he shares some of Luini's and Sodoma's fine qualities, without having any of Ferrari's force. A visit to the mangled remnants of his frescos in S. Caterina will repay the student of art. This was once, apparently, a double church, or a church with the hall and chapel of a *confraternità* appended to it. One portion of the building was painted with the history of the saint; and very lovely must this work have been, to judge by the fragments which have recently been rescued from whitewash, damp, and ruthless mutilation. What wonderful Lombard faces, half obliterated on the broken wall and mouldering plaster, smile upon us like drowned memories swimming up from the depths of oblivion! Wherever three or four are grouped together, we find an exquisite little picture—an old woman and two young women in a doorway, for example, telling no story, but touching us with simple harmony of form. Nothing further is needed to render their grace intelligible. Indeed, knowing the faults of the school, we may seek some consolation by telling ourselves that these incomplete fragments yield Lanini's best. In the coved compartments of the roof, above the windows, ran a row of dancing boys; and these are still most beautifully modelled, though the pallor of recent whitewash is upon them. All the boys have blonde hair. They are naked, with

scrolls or ribbons wreathed round them, adding to the airiness of their continual dance. Some of the loveliest are in a room used to stow away the lumber of the church—old boards and curtains, broken lanterns, candle-ends in tin sconces, the musty apparatus of festival adornments, and in the midst of all a battered, weather-beaten bier.

THE PIAZZA OF PIACENZA.

The great feature of Piacenza is its famous piazza—a romantically, picturesquely perfect square, surpassing the most daring attempts of the scene-painter, and realizing a poet's dreams. The space is considerable, and many streets converge upon it at irregular angles. Its finest architectural feature is the antique Palace of the Commune: Gothic arcades of stone below, surmounted by a brick building with wonderfully delicate and varied terra-cotta work in the round-arched windows. Before this façade, on the marble pavement, prance the bronze equestrian statues of two Farnesi—insignificant men, exaggerated horses, flying drapery—as *barocco* as it is possible to be in style, but so splendidly toned with verdigris, so superb in their *bravura* attitude, and so happily placed in the line of two streets lending far vistas from the square into the town beyond, that it is difficult to criticise them seriously. They form, indeed, an important element in the pictorial effect, and enhance the terra-cotta work of the façade by the contrast of their color.

The time to see this square is in evening twilight—that wonderful hour after sunset—when the people are strolling on the pavement, polished to a mirror by the pacing of successive centuries, and when the cavalry soldiers group themselves at the angles under the lamp-posts or beneath the dimly lighted Gothic arches of the palace. This is the magical mellow hour to be sought by lovers of the picturesque in all the towns of Italy, the hour which, by its tender blendings of sallow western lights with glimmering

lamps, casts the veil of half-shadow over any crudeness and restores the injuries of time; the hour when all the tints of these old buildings are intensified, etherealized, and harmonized by one pervasive glow. When I last saw Piacenza, it had been raining all day; and ere sundown a clearing had come from the Alps, followed by fresh threatenings of thunder-storms. The air was very liquid. There was a tract of yellow sunset sky to westward, a faint new moon half swathed in mist above, and over all the north a huge towered thunder-cloud kept flashing distant lightnings. The pallid primrose of the West, forced down and reflected back from that vast bank of tempest, gave unearthly beauty to the hues of church and palace—tender half-tones of violet and russet paling into grays and yellows on what in daylight seemed but dull red brick. Even the uncompromising façade of St. Francesco helped; and the dukes were like statues of the “Gran Commendatore,” waiting for Don Giovanni’s invitation.

MASOLINO AT CASTIGLIONE D’OLONA.

Through the loveliest Arcadian scenery of woods and fields and rushing waters the road leads downward from Varese to Castiglione. The Collegiate Church stands on a leafy hill above the town, with fair prospect over groves and waterfalls and distant mountains. Here in the choir is a series of frescos by Masolino da Panicale, the master of Masaccio, who painted them about the year 1428. “Masolinus de Florentia pinxit” decides their authorship. The histories of the Virgin, St. Stephen, and St. Lawrence are represented; but the injuries of time and neglect have been so great that it is difficult to judge them fairly. All we feel for certain is that Masolino had not yet escaped from the traditional Giottesque mannerism. Only a group of Jews stoning Stephen and Lawrence before the tribunal remind us by dramatic energy of the Brancacci chapel.

The baptistery frescos, dealing with the legend of St. John, show a remarkable advance; and they are luckily in better preservation. A soldier lifting his two-handed sword to strike off the Baptist's head is a vigorous figure full of Florentine realism. Also in the Baptism in Jordan we are reminded of Masaccio by an excellent group of bathers—one man taking off his hose, another putting them on again, a third standing naked with his back turned, and a fourth shivering half-dressed with a look of curious sadness on his face. The nude has been carefully studied and well realized. The finest composition of this series is a large panel representing a double action—Salome at Herod's table begging for the Baptist's head, and then presenting it to her mother Herodias. The costumes are *quattrocento* Florentine, exactly rendered. Salome is a graceful, slender creature; the two women who regard her offering to Herodias with mingled curiosity and horror are well conceived. The background consists of a mountain landscape in Masaccio's simple manner, a rich Renaissance villa, and an open loggia. The architecture perspective is scientifically accurate, and a frieze of boys with garlands on the villa is in the best manner of Florentine sculpture. On the mountain-side, diminished in scale, is a group of elders burying the body of St. John. These are massed together and robed in the style of Masaccio, and have his virile dignity of form and action. Indeed, this interesting wall-painting furnishes an epitome of Florentine art, in its intentions and achievements, during the first half of the fifteenth century. The color is strong and brilliant, and the execution solid.

The margin of the Salome panel has been used for scratching the chronicle of Castiglione. I read one date, 1568, several of the next century, the record of a duel between two gentlemen, and many inscriptions to this effect "Erodiana Regina," "Omnia prætereunt," etc. A dirty, one-eyed fellow keeps the place. In my

presence he swept the frescos over with a scratchy broom, flaying their upper surface in profound unconsciousness of mischief. The armor of the executioner has had its steel colors almost rubbed off by this infernal process. Damp and cobwebs are far kinder.

THE CERTOSA.

The Certosa of Pavia leaves upon the mind an impression of bewildering sumptuousness : nowhere else are costly materials so combined with a lavish expenditure of the rarest art. Those who have only once been driven round together with the crew of sight-seers can carry little away but the memory of lapis-lazuli and bronze-work, inlaid agates and labyrinthine sculpture, cloisters tenantless in silence, fair painted faces smiling from dark corners on the senseless crowd, trim gardens with rows of pink primroses in spring and of begonia in autumn, blooming beneath colonnades of glowing terra-cotta. The striking contrast between the Gothic of the interior and the Renaissance façade, each in its own kind perfect, will also be remembered ; and thoughts of the two great houses, Visconti and Sforza, to whose pride of power it is a monument, may be blended with the recollection of art-treasures alien to their spirit.

Two great artists, Ambrogio Borgognone and Antonio Amadeo, are the presiding genii of the Certosa. To minute criticism, based upon the accurate investigation of records and the comparison of styles, must be left the task of separating their work from that of numerous collaborators. But it is none the less certain that the key-note of the whole music is struck by them. Amadeo, the master of the Colleoni chapel at Bergamo, was both sculptor and architect. If the façade of the Certosa be not absolutely his creation, he had a hand in the distribution of its masses and the detail of its ornaments. The only fault in this otherwise faultless product of the purest quattrocento inspiration is that the façade

is a frontispiece, with hardly any structural relation to the church it masks; and this, though serious from the point of view of architecture, is no abatement of its sculpturesque and picturesque refinement. At first sight it seems a wilderness of loveliest reliefs and statues—of angel faces, fluttering raiment, flowing hair, love-laden youths, and stationary figures of grave saints, mid wayward tangles of acanthus and wild vine and cupid-laden foliage; but the subordination of these decorative details to the main design—clear, rhythmical, and lucid, like a chant of Pergolese or Stradella—will enrapture one who has the sense for unity evoked from divers elements, for thought subduing all caprices to the harmony of beauty. It is not possible elsewhere in Italy to find the instinct of the earlier Renaissance, so amorous in its expenditure of rare material, so lavish in its bestowal of the costliest workmanship on ornamental episodes, brought into truer keeping with a pure and simple structural effect.

All the great sculptor-architects of Lombardy worked in succession on this miracle of beauty; and this may account for the sustained perfection of style, which nowhere suffers from the languor of exhaustion in the artist or from repetition of motives. It remains the triumph of North Italian genius, exhibiting qualities of tenderness and self-abandonment to inspiration which we lack in the severer masterpieces of the Tuscan school.

To Borgognone is assigned the painting of the roof in nave and choir—exceeding rich, varied, and withal in sympathy with stately Gothic style. Borgognone, again, is said to have designed the saints and martyrs worked in *tarsia* for the choir-stalls. His frescos are in some parts well preserved, as in the lovely little Madonna at the end of the south chapel, while the great fresco above the window in the south transept has an historical value that renders it interesting in spite of partial decay. Borgognone's oil-pictures throughout the church prove, if such proof were need-

ed after inspection of the altar-piece in our National Gallery, that he was one of the most powerful and original painters of Italy, blending the repose of the earlier masters and their consummate workmanship with a profound sensibility to the finest shades of feeling and the rarest forms of natural beauty. He selected an exquisite type of face for his young men and women ; on his old men he bestowed singular gravity and dignity. His saints are a society of strong, pure, restful, earnest souls, in whom the passion of deepest emotion is transfigured by habitual calm. The brown and golden harmonies he loved are gained without sacrifice of lustre : there is a self-restraint in his coloring which corresponds to the reserve of his emotion ; and though a regret sometimes rises in our mind that he should have modelled the light and shade upon his faces with a brusque, unpleasing hardness, their pallor dwells within our memory as something delicately sought if not consummately attained. In a word, Borgognone was a true Lombard of the best time. The very imperfection of his flesh-painting repeats in color what the greatest Lombard sculptors sought in stone—a sharpness of relief that passes over into angularity. This brusqueness was the counterpoise to tenderness of feeling and intensity of fancy in these Northern artists. Of all Borgognone's pictures in the Certosa, I should select the altar-piece of St. Siro with St. Lawrence and St. Stephen and two fathers of the Church, for its fusion of this master's qualities.

The Certosa is a wilderness of lovely workmanship. From Borgognone's majesty we pass into the quiet region of Luini's Christian grace, or mark the influence of Leonardo on that rare Assumption of Madonna by his pupil, Andrea Solari. Like everything touched by the Leonardesque spirit, this great picture was left unfinished ; yet Northern Italy has nothing finer to show than the landscape, outspread in its immeasurable purity of calm, behind the grouped Apostles and the ascendent Mother of Heaven.

The feeling of that happy region between the Alps and Lombardy, where there are many waters—*et tacitos sine labe lacus sine murmure rivos*—and where the last spurs of the mountains sink in undulations to the plain, has passed into this azure vista, just as all Umbria is suggested in a twilight background of young Raphael or Perugino.

The portraits of the dukes of Milan and their families carry us into a very different realm of feeling. Medallions above the doors of sacristy and chancel, stately figures reared aloft beneath gigantic canopies, men and women slumbering with folded hands upon their marble biers—we read in all those sculptured forms a strange record of human restlessness resolved into the quiet of the tomb. The iniquities of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, *il gran Biscione*; the blood-thirst of Gian Maria; the dark designs of Filippo and his secret vices; Francesco Sforza's treason; Galeazzo Maria's vanities and lusts; their tyrants' dread of thunder and the knife; their awful deaths by pestilence and the assassin's poniard; their selfishness, oppression, cruelty, and fraud; the murders of their kinsmen; their labyrinthine plots and acts of broken faith—all is tranquil now, and we can say to each what Bosola found for the Duchess of Malfi ere her execution:

Much you had of land and rent;
Your length in clay's now competent;
A long war disturbed your mind;
Here your perfect peace is signed!

Some of these faces are commonplace, with *bourgeois* cunning written on the heavy features; one is bluff, another stolid, a third bloated, a fourth stately. The sculptors have dealt fairly with all, and not one has the lineaments of utter baseness. To Cristoforo Solari's statues of Lodovico Sforza and his wife, Beatrice d' Este, the palm of excellence in art and of historical interest must be awarded. Sculpture has rarely been more dignified and

true to life than here. The woman with her short clustering curls, the man with his strong face, are resting after that long fever which brought woe to Italy, to Europe a new age, and to the boasted minion of fortune a slow death in the prison palace of Loches. Attired in ducal robes, they lie in state; and the sculptor has carved the lashes on their eyelids heavy with death's marble sleep. He, at least, has passed no judgment on their crimes. Let us, too, bow and leave their memories to the historian's pen, their spirits to God's mercy.

After all wanderings in this temple of art, we return to Antonio Amadeo, to his long-haired seraphs playing on the lutes of Paradise, to his angels of the Passion with their fluttering robes and arms outspread in agony, to his saints and satyrs mingled on pilasters of the marble doorways, his delicate *Lavabo* decorations, and his hymns of piety expressed in noble forms of weeping women and dead Christs. Wherever we may pass, this master-spirit of the Lombard style enthralls attention. His curious treatment of drapery, as though it were made of crumpled paper, and his trick of enhancing relief by sharp angles and attenuated limbs, do not detract from his peculiar charm. That is his way, very different from Donatello's, of attaining to the maximum of life and lightness in the stubborn vehicle of stone. Nor do all the riches of the choir—those multitudes of singing angels, those Ascensions and Assumptions, and innumerable bass-reliefs of gleaming marble moulded into softest wax by mastery of art—distract our eyes from the single round medallion, not larger than a common plate, inscribed by him upon the front of the high-altar. Perhaps, if one who loved Amadeo were bidden to point out his masterpiece, he would lead the way at once to this. The space is small; yet it includes the whole tragedy of the Passion. Christ is lying dead among the women on his mother's lap, and there are pitying angels in the air above. One woman lifts his

arm, another makes her breast a pillow for his head. Their agony is hushed, but felt in every limb and feature ; and the extremity of suffering is seen in each articulation of the worn and wounded form just taken from the cross. It would be too painful, were not the harmony of art so rare, the interlacing of those many figures in a simple round so exquisite. The noblest tranquillity and the most passionate emotion are here fused in a manner of adorable naturalness.

From the church it is delightful to escape into the cloisters, flooded with sunlight, where the swallows skim and the brown hawks circle and the mason-bees are at work upon their cells among the carvings. The arcades of the two cloisters are the final triumph of Lombard terra-cotta. The memory fails before such infinite invention, such facility and felicity of execution. Wreaths of cupids gliding round the arches among grape-bunches and bird-haunted foliage of vine ; rows of angels, like rising and setting planets, some smiling and some grave, ascending and descending by the Gothic curves ; saints stationary on their pedestals and faces leaning from the rounds above ; crowds of cherubs and courses of stars and acanthus-leaves in woven lines and ribbons incessantly inscribed with Ave Maria ! Then, over all, the rich red light and purple shadows of the brick, than which no substance sympathizes more completely with the sky of solid blue above, the broad plain space of waving summer grass beneath our feet.

It is now late afternoon, and when evening comes the train will take us back to Milan. There is yet a little while to rest tired eyes and strained spirits among the willows and the poplars by the monastery wall. Through that gray-green leafage, young with early spring, the pinnacles of the Certosa leap like flames into the sky. The rice-fields are under water, far and wide, shining like burnished gold beneath the level light now near to sun-

down. Frogs are croaking; those persistent frogs whom the muses have ordained to sing for aye, in spite of Bion and all tuneful poets dead. We sit and watch the water-snakes, the busy rats, the hundred creatures swarming in the fat, well-watered soil. Nightingales here and there, new-comers, tune their timid April song. But, strangest of all sounds in such a place, my comrade from the Grisons jodels forth an Alpine cowherd's melody—*Auf den Alpen droben ist ein herrliches Leben!*

Did the echoes of Gian Galeazzo's convent ever wake to such a tune as this before?

SAN MAURIZIO.

The student of art in Italy, after mastering the characters of different styles and epochs, finds a final satisfaction in the contemplation of buildings designed and decorated by one master, or by groups of artists interpreting the spirit of a single period. Such supreme monuments of the national genius are not very common, and they are therefore the more precious. Giotto's chapel at Padua; the Villa Farnesina at Rome, built by Peruzzi and painted in fresco by Raphael and Sodoma; the Palazzo del Te at Mantua, Giulio Romano's masterpiece; the Scuola di San Rocco, illustrating the Venetian Renaissance at its climax, might be cited among the most splendid of these achievements. In the church of the Monastero Maggiore at Milan, dedicated to San Maurizio, Lombard architecture and fresco-painting may be studied in this rare combination. The monastery itself, one of the oldest in Milan, formed a retreat for cloistered virgins following the rule of St. Benedict. It may have been founded as early as the tenth century; but its church was rebuilt in the first two decades of the sixteenth, between 1503 and 1519, and was immediately afterwards decorated with frescos by Luini and his pupils. Gian Giacomo Dolcebono, architect and sculptor, called by his fellow-

craftsmen *magistro di taliare pietre*, gave the design, at once simple and harmonious, which was carried out with hardly any deviation from his plan. The church is a long parallelogram, divided into two unequal portions, the first and smaller for the public, the second for the nuns. The walls are pierced with rounded and pilastered windows, ten on each side, four of which belong to the outer and six to the inner section. The dividing wall or septum rises to the point from which the groinings of the roof spring; and round three sides of the whole building, north, east, and south, runs a gallery for the use of the convent. The altars of the inner and outer church are placed against the septum, back to back, with certain differences of structure that need not be described. Simple and severe, San Maurizio owes its architectural beauty wholly and entirely to purity of line and perfection of proportion. There is a prevailing spirit of repose, a sense of space, fair, lightsome, and adapted to serene moods of the meditative fancy in this building which is singularly at variance with the religious mysticism and imaginative grandeur of a Gothic edifice. The principal beauty of the church, however, is its tone of color. Every square inch is covered with fresco or rich wood-work mellowed by time into that harmony of tints which blends the work of greater and lesser artists in one golden hue of brown. Round the arcades of the convent-loggia run delicate arabesques with faces of fair female saints—Catherine, Agnes, Lucy, Agatha—gem-like or star-like, gazing from their gallery upon the church below. The Luinesque smile is on their lips and in their eyes, quiet, refined, as though the emblems of their martyrdom brought back no thought of pain to break the Paradise of rest in which they dwell. There are twenty-six in all—a sisterhood of stainless souls, the lilies of Love's garden planted round Christ's throne. Soldier saints are mingled with them in still smaller rounds above the windows, chosen to illustrate the virtues of an order which

renounced the world. To decide whose hand produced these masterpieces of Lombard suavity and grace, or whether more than one, would not be easy. Near the altar we can perhaps trace the style of Bartolommeo Suardi in an Annunciation painted on the spandrels—that heroic style, large and noble, known to us by the chivalrous St. Martin and the glorified Madonna of the Brera frescos. It is not impossible that the male saints of the loggia may be also his, though a tenderer touch, a something more nearly Leonardesque in its quietude, must be discerned in Lucy and her sisters. The whole of the altar in this inner church belongs to Luini. Were it not for darkness and decay, we should pronounce this series of the Passion in nine great compositions, with saints and martyrs and torch-bearing genii, to be one of his most ambitious and successful efforts. As it is, we can but judge in part; the adolescent beauty of Sebastian, the grave compassion of St. Rocco, the classical perfection of the cupid with lighted tapers, the gracious majesty of women smiling on us sideways from their Lombard eyelids—these remain to haunt our memory, emerging from the shadows of the vault above.

The inner church, as is fitting, excludes all worldly elements. We are in the presence of Christ's agony, relieved and tempered by the sunlight of those beauteous female faces. All is solemn here, still as the convent, pure as the meditations of a novice. We pass the septum, and find ourselves in the outer church appropriated to the laity. Above the high-altar the whole wall is covered with Luini's loveliest work, in excellent light and far from ill preserved. The space divides into eight compartments. A Pietà, an Assumption, Saints and Founders of the church, group themselves under the influence of Luini's harmonizing color into one symphonious whole. But the places of distinction are reserved for two great benefactors of the convent, Alessandro de' Bentivogli and his wife, Ippolita Sforza. When the Bentivogli

were expelled from Bologna by the papal forces, Alessandro settled at Milan, where he dwelt, honored by the Sforzas and allied to them by marriage, till his death in 1532. He was buried in the monastery by the side of his sister Alessandra, a nun of the order. Luini has painted the illustrious exile in his habit as he lived. He is kneeling, as though in ever-during adoration of the altar mystery, attired in a long black senatorial robe trimmed with furs. In his left hand he holds a book; and above his pale, serenely noble face is a little black berretta. Saints attend him, as though attesting to his act of faith. Opposite kneels Ippolita, his wife, the brilliant queen of fashion, the witty leader of society, to whom Bandello dedicated his *Novelle*, and whom he praised as both incomparably beautiful and singularly learned. Her queenly form is clothed from head to foot in white brocade, slashed and trimmed with gold lace, and on her forehead is a golden circlet. She has the proud port of a princess, the beauty of a woman past her prime, but stately, the indescribable dignity of attitude which no one but Luini could have rendered so majestically sweet. In her hand is a book; and she, like Alessandro, has her saintly sponsors, Agnes and Catherine and St. Scolastica.

Few pictures bring the splendid Milanese court so vividly before us as these portraits of the Bentivogli: they are, moreover, very precious for the light they throw on what Luini could achieve in the secular style so rarely touched by him. Great, however, as are these frescos, they are far surpassed both in value and interest by his paintings in the side chapel of St. Catherine. Here more than anywhere else, more even than at Saronno or Lugano, do we feel the true distinction of Luini—his unrivalled excellence as a colorist, his power over pathos, the refinement of his feeling, and the peculiar beauty of his favorite types. The chapel was decorated at the expense of a Milanese advocate, Francesco Besozzi, who died in 1529. It is he who is kneeling, gray-haired

and bare-headed, under the protection of St. Catherine of Alexandria, intently gazing at Christ unbound from the scourging-pillar. On the other side stand St. Lawrence and St. Stephen, pointing to the Christ and looking at us, as though their lips were framed to say: "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow." Even the soldiers who have done their cruel work seem softened. They untie the cords tenderly, and support the fainting form, too weak to stand alone. What sadness in the lovely faces of Sts. Catherine and Lawrence! What divine anguish in the loosened limbs and bending body of Christ; what piety in the adoring old man! All the moods proper to this supreme tragedy of the faith are touched as in some tenor song with low accompaniment of viols; for it was Luini's special province to feel profoundly and to express musically. The very depth of the Passion is there; and yet there is no discord.

Just in proportion to this unique faculty for yielding a melodious representation of the most intense moments of stationary emotion was his inability to deal with a dramatic subject. The first episode of St. Catherine's execution, when the wheel was broken and the executioners struck by lightning, is painted in this chapel without energy and with a lack of composition that betrays the master's indifference to his subject. Far different is the second episode when Catherine is about to be beheaded. The executioner has raised his sword to strike. She, robed in brocade of black and gold, so cut as to display the curve of neck and back, while the bosom is covered, leans her head above her praying hands, and waits the blow in sweetest resignation. Two soldiers stand at some distance in a landscape of hill and meadow; and far up are seen the angels carrying her body to its tomb upon Mount Sinai. I cannot find words or summon courage to describe the beauty of this picture—its atmosphere of holy peace, the dignity of its composition, the golden richness of its coloring. The

most tragic situation has here again been alchemized by Luini's magic into a pure idyl, without the loss of power, without the sacrifice of edification.

St. Catherine, in this incomparable fresco, is a portrait, the history of which so strikingly illustrates the relation of the arts to religion on the one hand, and to life on the other, in the age of the Renaissance, that it cannot be omitted. At the end of his fourth Novella, having related the life of the Contessa di Cellant, Boccaccio says: "And so the poor woman was beheaded; such was the end of her unbridled desires; and he who would fain see her painted to the life, let him go to the Church of the Monistero Maggiore, and there will he behold her portrait." The Contessa di Cellant was the only child of a rich usurer who lived at Casal Monferrato. Her mother was a Greek; and she was a girl of such exquisite beauty that, in spite of her low origin, she became the wife of the noble Ermete Visconti in her sixteenth year. He took her to live with him at Milan, where she frequented the house of the Bentivogli, but none other. Her husband told Boccaccio that he knew her temper better than to let her visit with the freedom of the Milanese ladies. Upon his death, while she was little more than twenty, she retired to Casale and led a gay life among many lovers. One of these, the Count of Cellant in the Val d' Aosta, became her second husband, conquered by her extraordinary loveliness. They could not, however, agree together. She left him, and established herself at Pavia. Rich with her father's wealth and still of most seductive beauty, she now abandoned herself to a life of profligacy. Three among her lovers must be named: Ardizzino Valperga, Count of Masino; Roberto Sanseverino, of the princely Naples family; and Don Pietro di Cardona, a Sicilian. With each of the two first she quarrelled, and separately besought each to murder the other. They were friends, and frustrated her plans by communicating them to one

another. The third loved her with the insane passion of a very young man. What she desired, he promised to do blindly; and she bade him murder his two predecessors in her favor. At this time she was living at Milan, where the Duke of Bourbon was acting as viceroy for the emperor. Don Pietro took twenty-five armed men of his household and waylaid the Count of Masino as he was returning, with his brother and eight or nine servants, late one night from supper. Both the brothers and the greater part of their suite were killed; but Don Pietro was caught. He revealed the atrocity of his mistress; and she was sent to prison. Incapable of proving her innocence, and prevented from escaping, in spite of fifteen thousand golden crowns with which she hoped to bribe her jailers, she was finally beheaded. Thus did a vulgar and infamous Messalina, distinguished only by rare beauty, furnish Luini with a St. Catherine for this masterpiece of pious art! The thing seems scarcely credible. Yet Bandello lived in Milan while the Church of St. Maurizio was being painted; nor does he show the slightest sign of disgust at the discord between the Contessa's life and her artistic presentation in the person of a royal martyr.

A HUMANIST'S MONUMENT.

In the Sculpture Gallery of the Brera is preserved a fair white marble tomb, carved by that excellent Lombard sculptor Agostino Busti. The epitaph runs as follows:

En Virtutem Mortis nesciam.

Vivet Lancinus Curtius

Sæcula per omnia

Quascunque lustrans oras,

Tantum possunt Camœnæ.

"Look here on Virtue that knows naught of Death! Lancinus Curtius shall live through all the centuries, and visit every shore

on earth. Such power have the Muses." The time-worn poet reclines, as though sleeping or resting, ready to be waked; his head is covered with flowing hair, and crowned with laurel; it leans upon his left hand. On either side of his couch stand cupids or genii with torches turned to earth. Above is a group of the three Graces, flanked by winged Pegasi. Higher up are throned two Victories with palms, and at the top a naked Fame. We need not ask who was Lancinus Curtius. He is forgotten, and his virtue has not saved him from oblivion; though he strove in his lifetime, *pro virili parte*, for the palm that Busti carved upon his grave. Yet his monument teaches in short compass a deep lesson; and his epitaph sums up the dream which lured the men of Italy in the Renaissance to their doom. We see before us sculptured in this marble the ideal of the humanistic poet-scholar's life: Love, Grace, the Muse, and Nakedness, and Glory. There is not a single intrusive thought derived from Christianity. The end for which the man lived was pagan. His hope was earthly fame. Yet his name survives, if this indeed be a survival, not in those winged verses which were to carry him abroad across the earth, but in the marble of a cunning craftsman, scanned now and then by a wandering scholar's eye in the half-darkness of a vault.

THE MONUMENT OF GASTON DE FOIX IN THE BRERA.

The hero of Ravenna lies stretched upon his back in the hollow of a bier covered with laced drapery; and his head rests on richly ornamented cushions. These decorative accessories, together with the minute work of his scabbard, wrought in the fanciful mannerism of the *cinquecento*, serve to enhance the statuesque simplicity of the young soldier's effigy. The contrast between so much of richness in the merely subordinate details and this sublime severity of treatment in the person of the hero is truly and

touchingly dramatic. There is a smile, as of content in death, upon his face; and the features are exceedingly beautiful—with the beauty of a boy, almost of a woman. The heavy hair is cut straight above the forehead and straight over the shoulders, falling in massive clusters. A delicately sculptured laurel-branch is woven into a victor's crown and laid lightly on the tresses it scarcely seems to clasp. So fragile is this wreath that it does not break the pure outline of the boy-conqueror's head. The armor is quite plain. So is the surcoat. Upon the swelling bust, that seems fit harbor for a hero's heart, there lies the collar of an order composed of cockle-shells; and this is all the ornament given to the figure. The hands are clasped across a sword laid flat upon the breast, and placed between the legs. Upon the chin is a little tuft of hair, parted, and curling either way; for the victor of Ravenna, like the Hermes of Homer, was *πρῶτον ὑπηνήτης*, "a youth of princely blood, whose beard hath just begun to grow, for whom the season of bloom is in its prime of grace." The whole statue is the idealization of *virtù*—that quality so highly prized by the Italians and the ancients, so well fitted for commemoration in the arts. It is the apotheosis of human life resolved into undying memory because of one great deed. It is the supreme portrait in modern times of a young hero, chiselled by artists belonging to a race no longer heroic, but capable of comprehending and expressing the æsthetic charm of heroism. Standing before it, we may say of Gaston what Arrian wrote to Hadrian of Achilles: "That he was a hero, if hero ever lived, I cannot doubt; for his birth and blood were noble, and he was beautiful, and his spirit was mighty, and he passed in youth's prime away from men." Italian sculpture, under the condition of the *cinquecento*, had indeed no more congenial theme than this of bravery and beauty, youth and fame, immortal honor and untimely death; nor could any sculptor of death have poetized the theme

more thoroughly than Agostino Busti, whose simple instinct, unlike that of Michael Angelo, led him to subordinate his own imagination to the pathos of reality.

SARONNO.

The Church of Saronno is a pretty building with a Bramantesque cupola, standing among meadows at some distance from the little town. It is the object of a special cult, which draws pilgrims from the neighboring country-side; but the concourse is not large enough to load the sanctuary with unnecessary wealth. Everything is very quiet in the holy place, and the offerings of the pious seem to have been only just enough to keep the building and its treasures of art in repair. The church consists of a nave, a central cupola, a vestibule leading to the choir, the choir itself, and a small tribune behind the choir. No other single building in North Italy can boast so much that is first-rate of the work of Luini and Gaudenzio Ferrari.

The cupola is raised on a sort of drum composed of twelve pieces, perforated with round windows and supported on four massive piers. On the level of the eye are frescos by Luini of St. Rocco, St. Sebastian, St. Christopher, and St. Anthony—by no means in his best style, and inferior to all his other paintings in this church. The Sebastian, for example, shows an effort to vary the traditional treatment of this saint. He is tied in a sprawling attitude to a tree; and little of Luini's special pathos or sense of beauty—the melody of idyllic grace made spiritual—appears in him. These four saints are on the piers. Above are frescos from the early Bible history by Lanini, painted in continuation of Ferrari's medallions from the story of Adam expelled from Paradise, which fill the space beneath the cupola, leading the eye upward to Ferrari's masterpiece.

The dome itself is crowded with a host of angels singing and

playing upon instruments of music. At each of the twelve angles of the drum stands a coryphæus of this celestial choir, full length, with waving drapery. Higher up, the golden-haired, broad-winged divine creatures are massed together, filling every square inch of the vault with color. Yet there is no confusion. The simplicity of the selected motive and the necessities of the place acted like a check on Ferrari, who, in spite of his dramatic impulse, could not tell a story coherently or fill a canvas with harmonized variety. There is no trace of his violence here. Though the motion of music runs through the whole multitude like a breeze, though the joy expressed is a real *tripudio celeste*, not one of all these angels flings his arms abroad or makes a movement that disturbs the rhythm. We feel that they are keeping time and resting quietly, each in his appointed seat, as though the sphere was circling with them round the throne of God, who is their centre and their source of gladness. Unlike Correggio and his imitators, Ferrari has introduced no clouds, and has in no case made the legs of his angels prominent. It is a mass of noble faces and voluminously robed figures, emerging each above the other like flowers in a vase. Each too has specific character, while all are robust and full of life, intent upon the service set them. Their instruments of music are all the lutes and viols, flutes, cymbals, drums, fifes, citherns, organs, and harps that Ferrari's day could show. The scale of color, as usual with Ferrari, is a little heavy; nor are the tints satisfactorily harmonized. But the vigor and invention of the whole work would atone for minor defects of far greater consequence.

It is natural, beneath this dome, to turn aside and think one moment of Correggio at Parma. Before the *macchinisti* of the seventeenth century had vulgarized the motive, Correggio's bold attempt to paint heaven in flight from earth—earth left behind in the persons of the apostles standing round the empty tomb,

heaven soaring upward with a spiral vortex into the abyss of light above—had an originality which set at naught all criticism. There is such ecstacy of jubilation, such rapturous rapidity of flight, that we who strain our eyes from below feel we are in the darkness of the grave which Mary left. A kind of controlling rhythm for the composition is gained by placing Gabriel, Madonna, and Christ at three points in the swirl of angels. Nevertheless, composition—the presiding, all-controlling intellect—is just what makes itself felt by absence; and Correggio's special qualities of light and color have now so far vanished from the cupola of the Duomo that the constructive poverty is not disguised. Here, if anywhere in painting, we may apply Goethe's words—*Gefühl ist Alles*.

If, then, we return to Ferrari's angels at Saronno, we find that the painter of Varallo chose a safer though a far more modest theme. Nor did he expose himself to that most cruel of all degradations which the ethereal genius of Correggio has suffered from incompetent imitators. To daub a tawdry and superficial reproduction of those Parmese frescos, to fill the cupolas of Italy with veritable *guazzetti di rane*, was comparatively easy; and between our intelligence and what remains of that stupendous masterpiece of boldness crowd a thousand memories of such ineptitude. On the other hand, nothing but solid work and conscientious inspiration could enable any workman, however able, to follow Ferrari in the path struck out by him at Saronno. His cupola has had no imitator; and its only rival is the noble pendant painted at Varallo by his own hand, of angels in adoring anguish round the cross.

In the ante-choir of the sanctuary are Luini's priceless frescos of the "Marriage of the Virgin" and the "Dispute with the Doctors."*

* Both these and the large frescos in the choir have been chromo-lithographed by the Arundel Society.

Their execution is flawless, and they are perfectly preserved. If criticism before such admirable examples of so excellent a master be permissible, it may be questioned whether the figures are not too crowded, whether the groups are sufficiently varied and connected by rhythmic lines. Yet the concords of yellow and orange with blue in the "Sposalizio," and the blendings of dull violet and red in the "Disputa," make up for much of stiffness. Here, as in the Chapel of St. Catherine at Milan, we feel that Luini was the greatest colorist among *frescanti*. In the "Sposalizio" the female heads are singularly noble and idyllically graceful. Some of the young men too have Luini's special grace and abundance of golden hair. In the "Disputa" the gravity and dignity of old men are above all things striking.

Passing into the choir, we find on either hand the "Adoration of the Magi" and the "Purification of the Virgin," two of Luini's divinest frescos. Above them in lunettes are four Evangelists and four Latin Fathers, with four Sibyls. Time and neglect have done no damage here; and here, again, perforce we notice perfect mastery of color in fresco. The blues detach themselves too much, perhaps, from the rest of the coloring; and that is all a devil's advocate could say. It is possible that the absence of blue makes the St. Catherine frescos in the Monastero Maggiore at Milan surpass all other works of Luini. But nowhere else has he shown more beauty and variety in detail than here. The group of women led by Joseph, the shepherd carrying the lamb upon his shoulder, the girl with a basket of white doves, the child with an apple on the altar-steps, the lovely youth in the foreground heedless of the scene; all these are idyllic incidents treated with the purest, the serenest, the most spontaneous, the truest, most instinctive sense of beauty. The landscape includes a view of Saronno, and an episodic picture of the "Flight into Egypt," where a white-robed angel leads the way. All these love-

ly things are in the "Purification," which is dated *Bernardinus Lovinus pinxit*, MDXXV.

The fresco of the "Magi" is less notable in detail, and in general effect is more spoiled by obtrusive blues. There is, however, one young man of wholly Leonardesque loveliness, whose divine innocence of adolescence, unalloyed by serious thought, unstirred by passions, almost forces a comparison with Sodoma. The only painter who approaches Luini in what may be called the Lombard, to distinguish it from the Venetian idyl, is Sodoma; and the work of his which comes nearest to Luini's masterpieces is the legend of St. Benedict, at Monte Oliveto, near Siena. Yet Sodoma had not all Luini's innocence or *naïveté*. If he added something slightly humorous which has an indefinite charm, he lacked that freshness, as of "cool, meek-blooded flowers" and boyish voices, which fascinates us in Luini. Sodoma was closer to the earth, and feared not to impregnate what he saw of beauty with the fiercer passions of his nature. If Luini had felt passion who shall say? It appears nowhere in his work, where life is toned to a religious joyousness. When Shelley compared the poetry of the Theocritean amouirists to the perfume of the tuberose, and that of the earlier Greek poets to "a meadow-gale of June, which mingles the fragrance of all the flowers of the field," he supplied us with critical images which may not unfairly be used to point the distinction between Sodoma at Monte Oliveto and Luini at Saronno.

THE CASTELLO OF FERRARA.

Is it possible that the patron saints of cities should mould the temper of the people to their own likeness? St. George, the chivalrous, is champion of Ferrara. His is the marble group above the cathedral porch, so feudal in its mediæval pomp. He and St. Michael are painted in fresco over the south portcullis of the castle. His lustrous armor gleams with Giorgionesque brilliancy

from Dossi's masterpiece in the Pinacoteca. That Ferrara, the only place in Italy where chivalry struck any root, should have had St. George for patron, is at any rate significant.

The best-preserved relic of princely feudal life in Italy is this Castello of the Este family, with its sombre moat, chained draw-bridges, doleful dungeons, and unnumbered tragedies, each one of which may be compared with Parisina's history. I do not want to dwell on these things now. It is enough to remember the Castello, built of ruddiest brick, time-mellowed with how many centuries of sun and soft sea-air, as it appeared upon the close of one tempestuous day. Just before evening the rain-clouds parted and the sun flamed out across the misty Lombard plain. The Castello burned like a hero's funeral pyre, and round its high-built turrets swallows circled in the warm blue air. On the moat slept shadows, mixed with flowers of sunset, tossed from pinnacle and gable. Then the sky changed. A roof of thunder-cloud spread overhead with the rapidity of tempest. The dying sun gathered his last strength against it, fretting those steel-blue arches with crimson; and all the fierce light, thrown from vault to vault of cloud, was reflected back as from a shield, and cast in blots and patches on the buildings. The Castle towered up rosy-red and shadowy sombre, enshrined, embosomed in those purple clouds; and momentarily ran lightning-forks like rapiers through the growing mass. Everything around, meanwhile, was quiet in the grass-grown streets. The only sound was a high, clear boy's voice chanting an opera-tune.

PETRARCH'S TOMB AT ARQUA.

The drive from Este along the skirts of the Euganean Hills to Arqua takes one through a country which is tenderly beautiful, because of its contrast between little peaked mountains and the plain. It is not a grand landscape. It lacks all that makes the

skirts of Alps and Apennines sublime. Its charm is a certain mystery and repose—an undefined sense of the neighboring Adriatic, a pervading consciousness of Venice unseen but felt from far away. From the terraces of Arqua the eye ranges across olive-trees, laurels, and pomegranates on the southern slopes to the misty level land that melts into the sea, with churches and tall campanili like gigantic galleys setting sail for fairyland over “the foam of perilous seas forlorn.” Let a blue-black shadow from a thunder-cloud be cast upon this plain, and let one ray of sunlight strike a solitary bell-tower: it burns with palest flame of rose against the steely dark, and in its slender shaft and shell-like tint of pink all Venice is foreseen.

The village church of Arqua stands upon one of these terraces, with a full stream of clearest water flowing by. On the little square before the church-door, where the peasants congregate at mass-time—open to the skies with all their stars and storms, girdled by the hills, and within hearing of the vocal stream—is Petrarch’s sepulchre. Fit resting-place for what remains to earth of such a poet’s clay! It is as though archangels, flying, had carried the marble chest and set it down here on the hill-side, to be a sign and sanctuary for after-men. A simple rectilinear coffin, of smooth Verona *mandorlato*, raised on four thick columns, and closed by a heavy cippus-cover. Without emblems, allegories, or lamenting genii, this tomb of the great poet, the great awakener of Europe from mental lethargy, encircled by the hills, beneath the canopy of heaven, is impressive beyond the power of words. Bending here, we feel that Petrarch’s own winged thoughts and fancies, eternal and aerial, “forms more real than living man, nurslings of immortality,” have congregated to be the ever-ministering and irremovable attendants on the shrine of one who, while he lived, was purest spirit in a veil of flesh.

ON A MOUNTAIN.

Milan is shining in sunset on those purple fields; and a score of cities flash back the last red light, which shows each inequality and undulation of Lombardy outspread four thousand feet beneath. Both ranges, Alps and Apennines, are clear to view; and all the silvery lakes are over-canopied and brought into one picture by flame-litten mists. Monte Rosa lifts her crown of peaks above a belt of clouds into light of living fire. The Mischabelhörner and the Dom rest stationary angel-wings upon the rampart, which at this moment is the wall of heaven. The pyramid of distant Monte Viso burns like solid amethyst far, far away. Mont Cervin beckons to his brother, the gigantic Finsteraarhorn, across tracts of liquid ether. Bells are rising from the villages, now wrapped in gloom, between me and the glimmering lake. A hush of evening silence falls upon the ridges, cliffs, and forests of this billowy hill, ascending into wave-like crests, and toppling with awful chasms over the dark waters of Lugano. It is good to be alone here at this hour. Yet I must rise and go—passing through meadows where white lilies sleep in silvery drifts, and asphodel is pale with spires of faintest rose, and narcissus dreams of his own beauty, loading the air with fragrance sweet as some love-music of Mozart. These fields want only the white figure of Persephone to make them poems; and in this twilight one might fancy that the queen had left her throne by Pluto's side to mourn for her dead youth among the flowers uplifted between earth and heaven. Nay, they are poems now, these fields; with that unchanging background of history, romance, and human life—the Lombard plain, against whose violet breadth the blossoms bend their faint heads to the evening air. Downward we hurry, on pathways where the beeches meet, by silent farms, by meadows honey-scented, deep in dew. The columbine stands tall and still

on those green slopes of shadowy grass. The nightingale sings now, and now is hushed again. Streams murmur through the darkness, where the growth of trees, heavy with honeysuckle and wild rose, is thickest. Fireflies begin to flit above the growing corn. At last the plain is reached, and all the skies are tremulous with starlight. Alas, that we should vibrate so obscurely to these harmonies of earth and heaven! The inner finer sense of them seems somehow unattainable—that spiritual touch of soul evoking soul from nature, which should transfigure our dull mood of self into impersonal delight. Man needs to be a mytho-poet at some moments, or, better still, to be a mystic steeped through half-unconsciousness in the vast wonder of the world. Cold and untouched to poetry or piety by scenes that ought to blend the spirit in ourselves with spirit in the world without, we can but wonder how this phantom show of mystery and beauty will pass away from us—how soon—and we be where, see what, use all our sensibilities on aught or naught?

SIC GENIUS.

In the picture-gallery at Modena there is a masterpiece of Dosso Dossi. The frame is old and richly carved; and the painting, bordered by its beautiful dull gold, shines with the lustre of an emerald. In his happy moods Dosso set color upon canvas as no other painter out of Venice ever did; and here he is at his happiest. The picture is the portrait of a jester, dressed in courtly clothes and with a feathered cap upon his head. He holds a lamb in his arms, and carries the legend, *Sic Genius*. Behind him is a landscape of exquisite brilliancy and depth. His face is young and handsome. Dosso has made it one most wonderful laugh. Even so perhaps laughed Yorick. Nowhere else have I seen a laugh thus painted: not violent, not loud, although the lips are opened to show teeth of dazzling whiteness; but fine

and delicate, playing over the whole face like a ripple sent up from the depths of the soul within. Who was he? What does the lamb mean? How should the legend be interpreted? We cannot answer these questions. He may have been the court-fool of Ferrara; and his genius, the spiritual essence of the man, may have inclined him to laugh at all things. That at least is the value he now has for us. He is the portrait of perpetual irony, the spirit of the golden sixteenth century which delicately laughed at the whole world of thoughts and things, the quintessence of the poetry of Ariosto, the wit of Berni, all condensed into one incarnation and immortalized by truthfullest art. With the Gaul, the Spaniard, and the German at her gates, and in her cities, and encamped upon her fields, Italy still laughed; and when the voice of conscience sounding through Savonarola asked her why, she only smiled—*Sic Genius*.

One evening in May we rowed from Venice to Torcello, and at sunset broke bread and drank wine together among the rank grasses just outside that ancient church. It was pleasant to sit in the so-called chair of Attila and feel the placid stillness of the place. Then there came lounging by a sturdy young fellow in brown country clothes, with a marvellous old wide-awake upon his head, and across his shoulders a bunch of massive church-keys. In strange contrast to his uncouth garb he flirted a pink Japanese fan, gracefully disposing it to cool his sun-burned olive cheeks. This made us look at him. He was not ugly. Nay, there was something of attractive in his face—the smooth-curved chin, the shrewd yet sleepy eyes, and finely-cut thin lips—a curious mixture of audacity and meekness blended upon his features. Yet this impression was but the prelude to his smile. When that first dawned, some breath of humor seeming to stir in him unbidden, the true meaning was given to his face. Each feature helped to make a smile that was the very soul's life of the man

expressed. It broadened, showing brilliant teeth, and grew into a noiseless laugh; and then I saw before me Dosso's jester, the type of Shakespeare's fools, the life of that wild irony, now rude, now fine, which once delighted courts. The laughter of the whole world and of all the centuries was silent in his face. What he said need not be repeated. The charm was less in his words than in his personality; for Momus-philosophy lay deep in every look and gesture of the man. The place lent itself to irony; parties of Americans and English parsons, the former agape for any rubbishy old things, the latter learned in the lore of obsolete church-furniture, had thronged Torcello; and now they were all gone, and the sun had set behind the Alps, while an irreverent stranger drank his wine in Attila's chair, and nature's jester smiled—*Sic Genius*.

When I slept that night I dreamed of an altar-piece in the Temple of Folly. The goddess sat enthroned beneath a canopy hung with bells and corals. On her lap was a beautiful winged smiling genius, who flourished two bright torches. On her left hand stood the man of Modena with his white lamb, a new St. John. On her right stood the man of Torcello with his keys, a new St. Peter. Both were laughing after their all-absorbent, divine, noiseless fashion; and under both was written, *Sic Genius*. Are not all things, even profanity, permissible in dreams?

MONTE GENEROSO.

THE long, hot days of Italian summer were settling down on plain and country when, in the last week of May, we travelled northward from Florence and Bologna seeking coolness. That was very hard to find in Lombardy. The days were long and sultry, the nights short, without a respite from the heat. Milan seemed a furnace, though in the Duomo and the narrow shady streets there was a twilight darkness which at least looked cool. Long may it be before the Northern spirit of improvement has taught the Italians to despise the wisdom of their forefathers, who built those sombre streets of palaces with overhanging eaves, that, almost meeting, form a shelter from the fiercest sun. The lake country was even worse than the towns; the sunlight lay all day asleep upon the shining waters, and no breeze came to stir their surface or to lift the tepid veil of haze, through which the stony mountains, with their yet unmelted patches of winter snow, glared as if in mockery of coolness.

Then we heard of a new inn, which had just been built by an enterprising Italian doctor below the very top of Monte Generoso. There was a picture of it in the hotel at Cadenabbia, but this gave but little idea of any particular beauty. A big square house, with many windows, and the usual ladies on mules, and guides with alpenstocks, advancing towards it, and some round bushes growing near, was all it showed. Yet there hung the real Monte Generoso above our heads, and we thought it must be cooler on its height than by the lake-shore. To find coolness was the great point with us just then. Moreover, some one talked of the won-

derful plants that grew among its rocks, and of its grassy slopes enamelled with such flowers as make our cottage-gardens at home gay in summer, not to speak of others rarer and peculiar to the region of the Southern Alps. Indeed, the Generoso has a name for flowers, and it deserves it, as we presently found.

This mountain is fitted by its position for commanding one of the finest views in the whole range of the Lombard Alps. A glance at the map shows that. Standing out pre-eminent among the chain of lower hills to which it belongs, the lakes of Lugano and Como with their long arms enclose it on three sides, while on the fourth the plain of Lombardy with its many cities, its rich pasture-lands and corn-fields intersected by winding river-courses and straight interminable roads, advances to its very foot. No place could be better chosen for surveying that contrasted scene of plain and mountain which forms the great attraction of the outlying buttresses of the central Alpine mass. The superiority of the Monte Generoso to any of the similar eminences on the northern outskirts of Switzerland is great. In richness of color, in picturesqueness of suggestion, in sublimity and breadth of prospect, its advantages are incontestable. The reasons for this superiority are obvious. On the Italian side the transition from mountain to plain is far more abrupt; the atmosphere being clearer, a larger sweep of distance is within our vision; again, the sunlight blazes all day long upon the very front and forehead of the distant Alpine chain, instead of merely slanting along it, as it does upon the northern side.

From Mendrisio, the village at the foot of the mountain, an easy mule-path leads to the hotel, winding first through English-looking hollow lanes with real hedges, which are rare in this country, and English primroses beneath them. Then comes a forest region of luxuriant chestnut-trees, giants with pink boles just bursting into late leafage, yellow and tender, but too thin as yet

for shade. A little higher up, the chestnuts are displaced by wild laburnums bending under their weight of flowers. The graceful branches meet above our heads, sweeping their long tassels against our faces as we ride beneath them, while the air for a good mile is full of fragrance. It is strange to be reminded in this blooming labyrinth of the dusty suburb roads and villa gardens of London. The laburnum is pleasant enough in St. John's Wood or the Regent's Park in May—a tame domesticated thing of brightness amid smoke and dust. But it is another joy to see it flourishing in its own home, clothing acres of the mountain-side in a very splendor of spring-color, mingling its paler blossoms with the golden broom of our own hills, and with the silver of the hawthorn and wild cherry. Deep beds of lilies-of-the-valley grow everywhere beneath the trees; and in the meadows purple columbines, white asphodels, the Alpine spiraea, tall, with feathery leaves, blue scabius, golden hawkweeds, turkscap lilies, and, better than all, the exquisite narcissus poeticus, with its crimson-tipped cup, and the pure pale lilies of San Bruno are crowded in a maze of dazzling brightness. Higher up the laburnums disappear, and flaunting crimson peonies gleam here and there upon the rocks, until at length the gentians and white ranunculuses of the higher Alps displace the less hardy flowers of Italy.

About an hour below the summit of the mountain we came upon the inn, a large clean building, with scanty furniture and snowy wooden floors, guiltless of carpets. It is big enough to hold about a hundred guests; and Dr. Pasta, who built it, a native of Mendrisio, was gifted either with much faith or with a real prophetic instinct.* Anyhow he deserves commendation for his

* It is but just to Dr. Pasta to remark that the above sentence was written more than ten years ago. Since then he has enlarged and improved his house in many ways, furnished it more luxuriously, made paths through the beechwoods round it, and brought excellent water at a great cost from a

spirit of enterprise. As yet the house is little known to English travellers: it is mostly frequented by Italians from Milan, Novara, and other cities of the plain, who call it the Italian Righi, and come to it, as cockneys go to Richmond, for noisy picnic excursions, or at most for a few weeks' *villeggiatura* in the summer heats. When we were there in May the season had scarcely begun, and the only inmates besides ourselves were a large party from Milan, ladies and gentlemen in holiday guise, who came, stayed one night, climbed the peak at sunrise, and departed amid jokes and shouting and half-childish play, very unlike the doings of a similar party in sober England. After that the stillness of nature descended on the mountain, and the sun shone day after day upon that great view which seemed created only for ourselves. And what a view it was! The plain, stretching up to the high horizon, where a misty range of pink cirrus-clouds alone marked the line where earth ended and the sky began, was islanded with cities and villages innumerable, basking in the hazy shimmering heat. Milan, seen through the doctor's telescope, displayed its Duomo perfect as a microscopic shell, with all its exquisite fretwork, and Napoleon's arch of triumph surmounted by the four tiny horses, as in a fairy's dream. Far off, long silver lines marked the lazy course of Po and Ticino, while little lakes like Varese and the lower end of Maggiore spread themselves out, connecting the mountains with the plain.

Five minutes' walk from the hotel brought us to a ridge where the precipice fell suddenly and almost sheer over one arm of Lugano Lake. Sullenly outstretched asleep it lay beneath us, colored with the tints of fluor-spar, or with the changeful green and azure of a peacock's breast. The depth appeared immeasurable. San Salvatore had receded into insignificance; the houses and spring near the summit of the mountain. A more charming residence from early spring to late autumn can scarcely be discovered.

churches and villas of Lugano bordered the lake-shore with an uneven line of whiteness. And over all there rested a blue mist of twilight and of haze, contrasting with the clearness of the peaks above. It was sunset when we first came here; and, wave beyond wave, the purple Italian hills tossed their crested summits to the foot of a range of stormy clouds that shrouded the high Alps. Behind the clouds was sunset, clear and golden; but the mountains had put on their mantle for the night, and the hem of their garment was all we were to see. And yet—over the edge of the topmost ridge of cloud, what was that long hard line of black, too solid and immovable for cloud, rising into four sharp needles clear and well defined? Surely it must be the familiar outline of Monte Rosa itself, the form which every one who loves the Alps knows well by heart, which picture-lovers know from Ruskin's woodcut in the *Modern Painters*. For a moment only the vision stayed: then clouds swept over it again, and from the place where the empress of the Alps had been a pillar of mist shaped like an angel's wing, purple and tipped with gold, shot up against the pale green sky. That cloud-world was a pageant in itself, as grand and more gorgeous perhaps than the mountains would have been. Deep down through the hollows of the Simplon a thunderstorm was driving; and we saw forked flashes once and again, as in a distant world, lighting up the valleys for a moment, and leaving the darkness blacker behind them as the storm blurred out the landscape forty miles away. Darkness was coming to us too, though our sky was clear and the stars were shining brightly. At our feet the earth was folding itself to sleep; the plain was wholly lost; little islands of white mist had formed themselves, and settled down upon the lakes and on their marshy estuaries; the birds were hushed; the gentian-cups were filling to the brim with dew. Night had descended on the mountain and the plain; the show was over.

The dawn was whitening in the east next morning when we again scrambled through the dwarf beechwood to the precipice above the lake. Like an ink-blot it lay, unruffled, slumbering sadly. Broad sheets of vapor brooded on the plain, telling of miasma and fever, of which we on the mountain, in the pure cool air, knew nothing. The Alps were all there now—cold, unreal, stretching like a phantom line of snowy peaks from the sharp pyramids of Monte Viso and the Grivola in the west to the distant Bernina and the Ortler in the east. Supreme among them towered Monte Rosa—queenly, triumphant, gazing down in prond pre-eminence, as she does when seen from any point of the Italian plain. There is no mountain like her. Mont Blanc himself is scarcely so regal; and she seems to know it, for even the clouds sweep humbled round her base, girdling her at most, but leaving her crown clear and free. Now, however, there were no clouds to be seen in all the sky. The mountains had a strange unshriven look, as if waiting to be blessed. Above them, in the cold gray air, hung a low black arch of shadow, the shadow of the bulk of the huge earth, which still concealed the sun. Slowly, slowly this dark line sank lower, till, one by one, at last, the peaks caught first a pale pink flush; then a sudden golden glory flashed from one to the other, as they leaped joyfully into life. It is a supreme moment this first burst of life and light over the sleeping world, as one can only see it on rare days and in rare places like the Monte Generoso. The earth—enough of it at least for us to picture to ourselves the whole—lies at our feet; and we feel as the Saviour might have felt, when from the top of that high mountain he beheld the kingdoms of the world and all the glory of them. Strangely and solemnly may we imagine to our fancy the lives that are being lived down in those cities of the plain: how many are waking at this very moment to toil and a painful weariness, to sorrow, or to “that unrest which men miscall de-

light;" while we upon our mountain buttress, suspended in mid-heaven and for a while removed from daily cares, are drinking in the beauty of the world that God has made so fair and wonderful. From this same eyrie, only a few years ago, the hostile armies of France, Italy, and Austria might have been watched moving in dim masses across the plains, for the possession of which they were to clash in mortal fight at Solferino and Magenta. All is peaceful now. It is hard to picture the waving corn-fields trodden down, the burning villages and ransacked vineyards, all the horrors of real war to which that fertile plain has been so often the prey. But now these memories of

"Old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago,"

do but add a calm and beauty to the radiant scene that lies before us. And the thoughts which it suggests, the images with which it stores our mind, are not without their noblest uses. The glory of the world sinks deeper into our shallow souls than we well know; and the spirit of its splendor is always ready to revisit us on dark and dreary days at home with an unspeakable refreshment. Even as I write, I seem to see the golden glow sweeping in broad waves over the purple hills nearer and nearer, till the lake brightens at our feet, and the windows of Lugano flash with sunlight, and little boats creep forth across the water like spiders on a pond, leaving an arrowy track of light upon the green behind them, while Monte Salvatore with its tiny chapel and a patch of the further landscape are still kept in darkness by the shadow of the Generoso itself. The birds wake into song as the sun's light comes; cuckoo answers cuckoo from ridge to ridge; dogs bark; and even the sounds of human life rise up to us: children's voices and the murmurs of the market-place ascending faintly from the many villages hidden among the chestnut-trees

beneath our feet; while the creaking of a cart we can but just see slowly crawling along the straight road by the lake is heard at intervals.

The full beauty of the sunrise is but brief. Already the low lakelike mists we saw last night have risen and spread, and shaken themselves out into masses of summer clouds, which, floating upward, threaten to envelop us upon our vantage-ground. Meanwhile they form a changeful sea below, blotting out the plain, surging up into the valleys with the movement of a billowy tide, attacking the lower heights like the advance-guard of a besieging army, but daring not as yet to invade the cold and solemn solitudes of the snowy Alps. These, too, in time, when the sun's heat has grown strongest, will be folded in their midday pall of sheltering vapor.

The very summit of Monte Generoso must not be left without a word of notice. The path to it is as easy as the sheep-walks on an English down, though cut along grass-slopes descending at a perilously sharp angle. At the top the view is much the same, as far as the grand features go, as that which is commanded from the cliff by the hotel. But the rocks here are crowded with rare Alpine flowers—delicate golden auriculas with powdery leaves and stems, pale yellow cowslips, imperial purple saxifrages, soldanellas at the edge of lingering patches of the winter snow, blue gentians, crocuses, and the frail, rosy-tipped ranunculus, called *glacialis*. Their blooming time is brief. When summer comes the mountain will be bare and burned, like all Italian hills. The Generoso is a very dry mountain, silent and solemn from its want of streams. There is no sound of falling waters on its crags; no musical rivulets flow down its sides, led carefully along the slopes, as in Switzerland, by the peasants, to keep their hay-crops green and gladden the thirsty turf throughout the heat and drought of summer. The soil is a Jurassic limestone: the rain penetrates

the porous rock, and sinks through cracks and fissures, to reappear above the base of the mountain in a full-grown stream. This is a defect in the Generoso, as much to be regretted as the want of shade upon its higher pastures. Here, as elsewhere in Piedmont, the forests are cut for charcoal; the beech-scrub, which covers large tracts of the hills, never having the chance of growing into trees much higher than a man. It is this which makes an Italian mountain at a distance look woolly, like a sheep's back. Among the brushwood, however, lilies-of-the-valley and Solomon's-seals delight to grow; and the league-long beds of wild strawberries prove that when the laburnums have faded the mountain will become a garden of feasting.

It was on the crest of Monte Generoso, late one afternoon in May, that we saw a sight of great beauty. The sun had yet about an hour before it sank behind the peaks of Monte Rosa, and the sky was clear, except for a few white clouds that floated across the plain of Lombardy. Then as we sat upon the crags, tufted with soldanellas and auriculas, we could see a fleecy vapor gliding upward from the hollows of the mountain, very thin and pale, yet dense enough to blot the landscape to the south and east from sight. It rose with an imperceptible motion, as the Oceanides might have soared from the sea to comfort Prometheus in the tragedy of *Æschylus*. Already the sun had touched its upper edge with gold, and we were expecting to be enveloped in a mist; when suddenly upon the outspread sheet before us there appeared two forms, larger than life, yet not gigantic, surrounded with halos of such tempered iridescence as the moon half hidden by a summer cloud is wont to make. They were the glorified figures of ourselves; and what we did the phantoms mocked, rising or bowing, or spreading wide their arms. Some scarce-felt breeze prevented the vapor from passing across the ridge to westward, though it still rose from beneath, and kept fading away into

thin air above our heads. Therefore the vision lasted as long as the sun stayed yet above the Alps; and the images with their aureoles shrank and dilated with the undulations of the mist. I could not but think of that old formula for an anthropomorphic deity—"the Brocken-spectre of the human spirit projected on the mists of the Non-ego." Even like those cloud-phantoms are the gods made in the image of man, who have been worshipped through successive ages of the world, gods dowered with like passions to those of the races who have crouched before them, gods cruel and malignant and lustful, jealous and noble and just, radiant or gloomy, the counterparts of men upon a vast and shadowy scale. But here another question rose. If the gods that men have made and ignorantly worshipped be really but glorified copies of their own souls, where is the sun in this parallel? Without the sun's rays the mists of Monte Generoso could have shown no shadowy forms. Without some other power than the mind of man, could men have fashioned for themselves those ideals that they named their gods? Unseen by Greek or Norseman or Hindoo, the potent force by which alone they could externalize their image existed outside them, independent of their thought. Nor does the trite epigram touch the surface of the real mystery. The sun, the human beings on the mountain, and the mists are all parts of one material universe: the transient phenomenon we witnessed was but the effect of a chance combination. Is, then, the anthropomorphic God as momentary and as accidental in the system of the world as that vapory spectre? The God in whom we live and move and have our being must be far more all-pervasive, more ineognizable by the souls of men, who doubt not for one moment of his presence and his power. Except for purposes of rhetoric the metaphor that seemed so clever fails. Nor, when once such thoughts have been stirred in us by such a sight, can we do better than repeat Goethe's sublime profession of a philo-

sophic mysticism. This translation I made one morning on the Pasterze Gletscher beneath the spires of the Gross Glockner :

To Him who from eternity, self-stirred,
Himself hath made by His creative word !
To Him, supreme, who causeth faith to be,
Trust, hope, love, power, and endless energy !
To Him who, seek to name Him as we will,
Unknown within Himself abideth still !

Strain ear and eye, till sight and sense be dim ;
Thou'lt find but faint similitudes of Him :
Yea, and thy spirit in her flight of flame
Still strives to gauge the symbol and the name :
Charmed and compelled thou climb'st from height to height,
And round thy path the world shines wondrous bright ;
Time, space, and size, and distance cease to be,
And every step is fresh infinity.

What were the God who sat outside to scan
The spheres that 'neath His finger circling ran ?
God dwells within, and moves the world, and moulds,
Himself and nature in one form enfolds :
Thus all that lives in Him and breathes and is
Shall ne'er His puissance, ne'er His spirit miss.

The soul of man, too, is a universe :
Whence follows it that race with race concurs
In naming all it knows of good and true
God—yea, its own God ; and with homage due
Surrenders to His sway both earth and heaven ;
Fears Him, and loves, where place for love is given.

*LOVE OF THE ALPS.**

OF all the joys in life, none is greater than the joy of arriving on the outskirts of Switzerland at the end of a long dusty day's journey from Paris. The true epicure in refined pleasures will never travel to Basle by night. He courts the heat of the sun and the monotony of French plains—their sluggish streams and never-ending poplar-trees—for the sake of the evening coolness and the gradual approach to the great Alps, which await him at the close of the day. It is about Mulhausen that he begins to feel a change in the landscape. The fields broaden into rolling downs, watered by clear and running streams; the green Swiss thistle grows by river-side and cow-shed; pines begin to tuft the slopes of gently rising hills; and now the sun has set, the stars come out, first Hesper, then the troop of lesser lights; and he feels—yes, indeed, there is now no mistake—the well-known, well-loved magical fresh air that never fails to blow from snowy mountains and meadows watered by perennial streams. The last hour is one of exquisite enjoyment, and when he reaches Basle he scarcely sleeps all night for hearing the swift Rhine beneath the balconies, and knowing that the moon is shining on its waters, through the town, beneath the bridges, between pasture-lands and copses, up the still mountain-girdled valleys to the ice-caves where the water springs. There is nothing in all experience of travel-

* This essay was written in 1866, and published in 1867. Reprinting it in 1879, after eighteen months spent continuously in one high valley of the Grisons, I feel how slight it is. For some amends, I take this opportunity of printing at the end of it a description of Davos in winter.

ling like this. We may greet the Mediterranean at Marseilles with enthusiasm; on entering Rome by the Porta del Popolo, we may reflect with pride that we have reached the goal of our pilgrimage, and are at last among world-shaking memories. But neither Rome nor the Riviera wins our hearts like Switzerland. We do not lie awake in London thinking of them; we do not long so intensely, as the year comes round, to revisit them. Our affection is less a passion than that which we cherish for Switzerland.

Why, then, is this? What, after all, is the love of the Alps, and when and where did it begin? It is easier to ask these questions than to answer them. The classic nations hated mountains. Greek and Roman poets talk of them with disgust and dread. Nothing could have been more depressing to a courtier of Augustus than residence at Aosta, even though he found his theatres and triumphal arches there. Wherever classical feeling has predominated this has been the case. Cellini's Memoirs, written in the height of pagan Renaissance, well express the aversion which a Florentine or Roman felt for the inhospitable wildernesses of Switzerland.* Dryden, in his dedication to *The Indian Emperor*, says, "High objects, it is true, attract the sight; but it looks up with pain on craggy rocks and barren mountains, and continues not intent on any object which is wanting in shades and green to entertain it." Addison and Gray had no better epithets than "rugged," "horrid," and the like for Alpine landscape. The classic spirit was adverse to enthusiasm for mere nature. Humanity was too prominent, and city life absorbed all interests—not to speak of what, perhaps, is the weightiest reason, that solitude, indifferent accommodation, and imperfect means of travelling rendered mountainous countries peculiarly disagreeable. It is impossible to enjoy art or nature while suffering from fatigue and cold, dreading the attacks of robbers, and wondering whether

* See, however, what is said about Leo Battista Alberti above, "Rimini," p. 92 sqq.

you will find food and shelter at the end of your day's journey. Nor was it different in the Middle Ages. Then individuals had either no leisure from war or strife with the elements, or else they devoted themselves to the salvation of their souls. But when the ideas of the Middle Ages had decayed, when improved arts of life had freed men from servile subjection to daily needs, when the bondage of religious tyranny had been thrown off and political liberty allowed the full development of tastes and instincts, when, moreover, the classical traditions had lost their power, and courts and coteries became too narrow for the activity of man—then suddenly it was discovered that Nature in herself possessed transcendent charms. It may seem absurd to class them all together; yet there is no doubt that the French Revolution, the criticism of the Bible, Pantheistic forms of religious feeling, landscape painting, Alpine travelling, and the poetry of Nature are all signs of the same movement—of a new Renaissance. Limitations of every sort have been shaken off during the last century; all forms have been destroyed, all questions asked. The classical spirit loved to arrange, model, preserve traditions, obey laws. We are intolerant of everything that is not simple, unbiassed by prescription, liberal as the wind, and natural as the mountain crags. We go to feed this spirit of freedom among the Alps. What the virgin forests of America are to the Americans the Alps are to us. What there is in these huge blocks and walls of granite crowned with ice that fascinates us it is hard to analyze. Why, seeing that we find them so attractive, they should have repelled our ancestors of the fourth generation and all the world before them, is another mystery. We cannot explain what *rappport* there is between our human souls and these inequalities in the surface of the earth which we call Alps. Tennyson speaks of

Some vague emotion of delight
In gazing up an Alpine height,

and its vagueness eludes definition. The interest which physical science has created for natural objects has something to do with it. Curiosity and the charm of novelty increase this interest. No towns, no cultivated tracts of Europe, however beautiful, form such a contrast to our London life as Switzerland. Then there is the health and joy that comes from exercise in open air; the senses freshened by good sleep; the blood quickened by a lighter and rarer atmosphere. Our modes of life, the breaking down of class privileges, the extension of education, which contribute to make the individual greater and society less, render the solitude of mountains refreshing. Facilities of travelling and improved accommodation leave us free to enjoy the natural beauty which we seek. Our minds, too, are prepared to sympathize with the inanimate world; we have learned to look on the universe as a whole, and ourselves as a part of it, related by close ties of friendship to all its other members. Shelley's, Wordsworth's, Goethe's poetry has taught us this; we are all more or less Pantheists, worshippers of "God in Nature," convinced of the omnipresence of the informing mind.

Thus, when we admire the Alps, we are, after all, but children of the century. We follow its inspiration blindly; and while we think ourselves spontaneous in our ecstasy, perform the part for which we have been trained from childhood by the atmosphere in which we live. It is this very unconsciousness and universality of the impulse we obey which makes it hard to analyze. Contemporary history is difficult to write; to define the spirit of the age in which we live is still more difficult; to account for "impressions which owe all their force to their identity with themselves" is most difficult of all. We must be content to feel, and not to analyze.

Rousseau has the credit of having invented the love of nature. Perhaps he first expressed in literature the pleasures of open life

among the mountains, of walking-tours, of the *école buissonnière*, away from courts and schools and cities, which it is the fashion now to love. His *bourgeois* birth and tastes, his peculiar religious and social views, his intense self-engrossment—all favored the development of nature-worship. But Rousseau was not alone, nor yet creative, in this instance. He was but one of the earliest to seize and express a new idea of growing humanity. For those who seem to be the most original in their inauguration of periods are only such as have been favorably placed by birth and education to imbibe the floating creeds of the whole race. They resemble the first cases of an epidemic, which become the centres of infection and propagate disease. At the time of Rousseau's greatness the French people were initiative. In politics, in literature, in fashions, and in philosophy they had for some time led the taste of Europe. But the sentiment which first received a clear and powerful expression in the works of Rousseau soon declared itself in the arts and literature of other nations. Goethe, Wordsworth, and the earlier landscape-painters proved that Germany and England were not far behind the French. In England this love of nature for its own sake is indigenous, and has at all times been peculiarly characteristic of our genius. Therefore it is not surprising that our life and literature and art have been foremost in developing the sentiment of which we are speaking. Our poets, painters, and prose-writers gave the tone to European thought in this respect. Our travellers in search of the adventurous and picturesque, our Alpine Club, have made of Switzerland an English play-ground.

The greatest period in our history was but a foreshadowing of this. To return to nature-worship was but to reassume the habits of the Elizabethan age, altered, indeed, by all the changes of religion, politics, society, and science which the last three centuries have wrought, yet still, in its original love of free, open life

among the fields and woods and on the sea, the same. Now the French national genius is classical. It reverts to the age of Louis XIV., and Rousseauism in their literature is as true an innovation and parenthesis as Pope and Drydenism was in ours. As in the age of the Reformation, so in this, the German element of the modern character predominates. During the two centuries from which we have emerged the Latin element had the upperhand. Our love of the Alps is a Gothic, a Tentonic instinct; sympathetic with all that is vague, infinite, and insubordinate to rules; at war with all that is defined and systematic in our genius. This we may perceive in individuals as well as in the broader aspects of arts and literatures. The classically minded man, the reader of Latin poets, the lover of brilliant conversation, the frequenter of clubs and drawing-rooms, nice in his personal requirements, scrupulous in his choice of words, averse to unnecessary physical exertion, preferring town to country life, *cannot* deeply feel the charm of the Alps. Such a man will dislike German art, and, however much he may strive to be catholic in his tastes, will find as he grows older that his liking for Gothic architecture and modern painting diminish almost to aversion before an increasing admiration for Greek peristyles and the Medicean Venus. If in respect of speculation all men are either Platonists or Aristotelians, in respect of taste all men are either Greek or German.

At present the German, the indefinite, the natural, commands; the Greek, the finite, the cultivated, is in abeyance. We who talk so much about the feeling of the Alps are creatures, not creators, of our *cultus*—a strange reflection, proving how much greater man is than men, the common reason of the age in which we live than our own reasons, its constituents and subjects.

Perhaps it is our modern tendency to "individualism" which makes the Alps so much to us. Society is there reduced to a vanishing-point—no claims are made on human sympathies—

there is no need to toil in yoke-service with our fellows. We may be alone, dream our own dreams, and sound the depths of personality without the reproach of selfishness, without a restless wish to join in action or money-making or the pursuit of fame. To habitual residents among the Alps this absence of social duties and advantages may be barbarizing, even brutalizing. But to men wearied with too much civilization and deafened by the noise of great cities, it is beyond measure refreshing. Then, again, among the mountains history finds no place. The Alps have no past nor present nor future. The human beings who live upon their sides are at odds with nature, clinging on for bare existence to the soil, sheltering themselves beneath protecting rocks from avalanches, damming up destructive streams, all but annihilated every spring. Man, who is paramount in the plain, is nothing here. His arts and sciences, and dynasties, and modes of life, and mighty works, and conquests and decays demand our whole attention in Italy or Egypt. But here the mountains, immemorially the same, which were, which are, and which are to be, present a theatre on which the soul breathes freely and feels herself alone. Around her on all sides is God, and Nature, who is here the face of God, and not the slave of man. The spirit of the world hath here not yet grown old. She is as young as on the first day; and the Alps are a symbol of the self-creating, self-sufficing, self-enjoying universe which lives for its own ends. For why do the slopes gleam with flowers, and the hill-sides deck themselves with grass, and the inaccessible ledges of black rock bear their tufts of crimson primroses and flaunting tiger-lilies? Why, morning after morning, does the red dawn flush the pinnacles of Monte Rosa above cloud and mist unheeded? Why does the torrent shout, the avalanche reply in thunder to the music of the sun, the trees and rocks and meadows cry their "Holy! holy! holy!" Surely not for us. We are an accident

here, and even the few men whose eyes are fixed habitually upon these things are dead to them; the peasants do not even know the names of their own flowers, and sigh with envy when you tell them of the plains of Lincolnshire or Russian steppes.

But, indeed, there is something awful in the Alpine elevation above human things. We do not love Switzerland merely because we associate its thought with recollections of holidays and joyfulness. Some of the most solemn moments of life are spent high up above among the mountains, on the barren tops of rocky passes, where the soul has seemed to hear in solitude a low controlling voice. It is almost necessary for the development of our deepest affections that some sad and sombre moments should be interchanged with hours of merriment and elasticity. It is this variety in the woof of daily life which endears our home to us; and perhaps none have fully loved the Alps who have not spent some days of meditation, or, it may be, of sorrow, among their solitudes. Splendid scenery, like music, has the power to make "of grief itself a fiery chariot for mounting above the sources of grief," to ennoble and refine our passions, and to teach us that our lives are merely moments in the years of the eternal Being. There are many, perhaps, who, within sight of some great scene among the Alps, upon the height of the Stelvio or the slopes of Mürren, or at night in the Valley of Cormayeur, have felt themselves raised above care and doubts and miseries by the mere recognition of unchangeable magnificence; have found a deep peace in the sense of their own nothingness. It is not granted to us every day to stand upon these pinnacles of rest and faith above the world. But, having once stood there, how can we forget the station? How can we fail, amid the tumult of our common cares, to feel at times the hush of that far-off tranquillity? When our life is most commonplace, when we are ill or weary in city streets, we can remember the clouds upon the mountains we

have seen, the sound of innumerable waterfalls, and the scent of countless flowers. A photograph of Bisson's or of Braun's, the name of some well-known valley, the picture of some Alpine plant, rouses the sacred hunger in our souls and stirs again the faith in beauty and in rest beyond ourselves which no man can take from us. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to everything which enables us to rise above depressing and enslaving circumstances, which brings us nearer in some way or other to what is eternal in the universe, and which makes us know that, whether we live or die, suffer or enjoy, life and gladness are still strong in the world. On this account the proper attitude of the soul among the Alps is one of silence. It is almost impossible, without a kind of impiety, to frame in words the feelings they inspire. Yet there are some sayings, hallowed by long usage, which throng the mind through a whole summer's day and seem in harmony with its emotions—some portions of the Psalms or lines of greatest poets, inarticulate hymns of Beethoven and Mendelssohn, waifs and strays not always apposite, but linked by strong and subtle chains of feeling with the grandeur of the mountains. This reverential feeling for the Alps is connected with the Pantheistic form of our religious sentiments to which I have before alluded. It is a trite remark, that even devout men of the present generation prefer temples *not* made with hands to churches, and worship God in the fields more contentedly than in their pews. What Mr. Ruskin calls "the instinctive sense of the divine presence not formed into distinct belief" lies at the root of our profound veneration for the nobler aspects of mountain scenery. This instinctive sense has been very variously expressed by Goethe in Faust's celebrated confession of faith, by Shelley in the stanzas of *Adonais*, which begin "He is made one with nature," by Wordsworth in the lines on Tintern Abbey, and lately by Mr. Roden Noel in his noble poems of Pantheism.

It is more or less strongly felt by all who have recognized the indubitable fact that religious belief is undergoing a sure process of change from the dogmatic distinctness of the past to some at present dimly desiered creed of the future. Such periods of transition are of necessity full of discomfort, doubt, and anxiety, vague, variable, and unsatisfying. The men in whose spirits the fermentation of the change is felt, who have abandoned their old moorings, and have not yet reached the haven for which they are steering, cannot but be indistinct and undecided in their faith. The universe of which they form a part becomes important to them in its infinite immensity. The principles of beauty, goodness, order, and law, no longer connected in their minds with definite articles of faith, find symbols in the outer world. They are glad to fly at certain moments from mankind and its oppressive problems—for which religion no longer provides a satisfactory solution—to nature, where they vaguely localize the spirit that broods over us, controlling all our being. For such men Goethe's hymn, already quoted,* is a form of faith, and born of such a mood are the following far humbler verses :

At Mürren let the morning lead thee out
To walk upon the cold and cloven hills,
To hear the congregated mountains shout
Their pæan of a thousand foaming rills.
Raimented with intolerable light
The snow-peaks stand above thee, row on row
Arising, each a seraph in his might ;
An organ each of varied stop doth blow.
Heaven's azure dome trembles through all her spheres,
Feeling that music vibrate ; and the sun
Raises his tenor as he upward steers,
And all the glory-coated mists that run
Below him in the valley hear his voice,
And cry unto the dewy fields, Rejoice !

* Page 283.

There is a profound sympathy between music and fine scenery; they both affect us in the same way, stirring strong but undefined emotions which express themselves in "idle tears," or evoking thoughts "which lie," as Wordsworth says, "too deep for tears," beyond the reach of any words. How little we know what multitudes of mingling reminiscences, held in solution by the mind, and coloring its fancy with the iridescence of variable hues, go to make up the sentiments which music or which mountains stir. It is the very vagueness, changefulness, and dreamlike indistinctness of these feelings which cause their charm; they harmonize with the haziness of our beliefs and seem to make our very doubts melodious. For this reason it is obvious that unrestrained indulgence in the pleasures of music or of scenery may tend to destroy habits of clear thinking, sentimentalize the mind, and render it more apt to entertain embryonic fancies than to bring ideas to definite perfection.

If hours of thoughtfulness and seclusion are necessary to the development of a true love for the Alps, it is no less essential to a right understanding of their beauty that we should pass some wet and gloomy days among the mountains. The unclouded sunsets and sunrises which often follow one another in September in the Alps have something terrible. They produce a satiety of splendor and oppress the mind with a sense of perpetuity. I remember spending such a season in one of the *Oberland* valleys, high up above the pine-trees, in a little chalet. Morning after morning I awoke to see the sunbeams glittering on the Eiger and the Jungfrau; noon after noon the snow-fields blazed beneath a steady fire; evening after evening they shone like beacons in the red light of the setting sun. Then, peak by peak, they lost the glow; the soul passed from them, and they stood pale yet weirdly garish against the darkened sky. The stars came out, the moon shone, but not a cloud sailed over the untroubled heavens. Thus

day after day for several weeks there was no change, till I was seized with an overpowering horror of unbroken calm. I left the valley for a time; and when I returned to it, in wind and rain, I found that the partial veiling of the mountain heights restored the charm which I had lost and made me feel once more at home. The landscape takes a graver tone beneath the mist that hides the higher peaks, and comes drifting, creeping, feeling, through the pines upon their slopes—white, silent, blinding vapor-wreaths around the sable spires. Sometimes the cloud descends and blots out everything. Again it lifts a little, showing cottages and distant Alps beneath its skirts. Then it sweeps over the whole valley like a veil, just broken here and there above a lonely chalet or a thread of distant dangling torrent foam. Sounds, too, beneath the mist are more strange. The torrent seems to have a hoarser voice, and grinds the stones more passionately against its boulders. The cry of shepherds through the fog suggests the loneliness and danger of the hills. The bleating of penned sheep or goats and the tinkling of the cow-bells are mysteriously distant and yet distinct in the dull, dead air. Then, again, how immeasurably high above our heads appear the domes and peaks of snow revealed through chasms in the drifting cloud; how desolate the glaciers and the avalanches in gleams of light that struggle through the mist! There is a leaden glare peculiar to clouds which makes the snow and ice more lurid. Not far from the house where I am writing, the avalanche that swept away the bridge last winter is lying now, dripping away, dank and dirty, like a rotting whale. I can see it from my window, green beech-boughs nodding over it, forlorn larches bending their tattered branches by its side, splinters of broken pine protruding from its muddy caves, the boulders on its flank, and the hoarse, hungry torrent tossing up its tongues to lick the ragged edge of snow. Close by, the meadows, spangled with yellow flowers and red and

blue, look even more brilliant than if the sun were shining on them. Every cup and blade of grass is drinking. But the scene changes; the mist has turned into rain-clouds, and the steady rain drips down, incessant, blotting out the view. Then, too, what a joy it is if the clouds break towards evening with a north wind, and a rainbow in the valley gives promise of a bright to-morrow. We look up to the cliffs above our heads, and see that they have just been powdered with the snow that is a sign of better weather.

Such rainy days ought to be spent in places like Seelisberg and Mürren, at the edge of precipices, in front of mountains, or above a lake. The cloud-masses crawl and tumble about the valleys like a brood of dragons; now creeping along the ledges of the rock with sinuous self-adjustment to its turns and twists; now launching out into the deep, repelled by battling winds, or driven onward in a coil of twisted and contorted serpent curls. In the midst of summer these wet seasons often end in a heavy fall of snow. You wake some morning to see the meadows which last night were gay with July flowers huddled up in snow a foot in depth. But fair weather does not tarry long to reappear. You put on your thickest boots and sally forth to find the great cups of the gentians full of snow, and to watch the rising of the cloud-wreaths under the hot sun. Bad dreams or sickly thoughts, dissipated by returning daylight or a friend's face, do not fly away more rapidly and pleasantly than those swift glory-coated mists that lose themselves we know not where in the blue depths of the sky.

In contrast with these rainy days nothing can be more perfect than clear moonlight nights. There is a terrace upon the roof of the inn at Cormayeur where one may spend hours in the silent watches, when all the world has gone to sleep beneath. The Mont Chétif and the Mont de la Saxe form a gigantic portal not un-

worthy of the pile that lies beyond. For Mont Blanc resembles a vast cathedral; its countless spires are scattered over a mass like that of the Duomo at Milan, rising into one tower at the end. By night the glaciers glitter in the steady moon; domes, pinnacles, and buttresses stand clear of clouds. Needles of every height and most fantastic shapes rise from the central ridge, some solitary, like sharp arrows shot against the sky, some clustering into sheaves. On every horn of snow and bank of grassy hill stars sparkle—rising, setting, rolling round through the long silent night. Moonlight simplifies and softens the landscape. Colors become scarcely distinguishable, and forms, deprived of half their detail, gain in majesty and size. The mountains seem greater far by night than day—higher heights and deeper depths, more snowy pyramids, more beetling crags, softer meadows, and darker pines. The whole valley is hushed but for the torrent and the chirping grasshopper and the striking of the village clocks. The black tower and the houses of Cormayeur in the foreground gleam beneath the moon until she reaches the edge of the Cramont, and then sinks quietly away, once more to reappear among the pines, then finally to leave the valley dark beneath the shadow of the mountain's bulk. Meanwhile the heights of snow still glitter in the steady light; they, too, will soon be dark, until the dawn breaks, tinging them with rose.

But it is not fair to dwell exclusively upon the more sombre aspect of Swiss beauty when there are so many lively scenes of which to speak. The sunlight and the freshness and the flowers of Alpine meadows form more than half the charm of Switzerland. The other day we walked to a pasture called the Col de Checruit, high up the valley of Cormayeur, where the spring was still in its first freshness. Gradually we climbed, by dusty roads and through hot fields where the grass had just been mown, beneath the fierce light of the morning sun. Not a breath of air was stirring, and

the heavy pines hung overhead upon their crags, as if to fence the gorge from every wandering breeze. There is nothing more oppressive than these scorching sides of narrow rifts, shut in by woods and precipices. But suddenly the valley broadened, the pines and larches disappeared, and we found ourselves upon a wide green semicircle of the softest meadows. Little rills of water went rushing through them, rippling over pebbles, rustling under dock-leaves, and eddying against their wooden barriers. Far and wide "you scarce could see the grass for flowers," while on every side the tinkling of cow-bells and the voices of shepherds calling to one another from the Alps or singing at their work were borne across the fields. As we climbed we came into still fresher pastures where the snow had scarcely melted. There the goats and cattle were collected, and the shepherds sat among them, fondling the kids and calling them by name. When they called, the creatures came, expecting salt and bread. It was pretty to see them lying near their masters, playing and butting at them with their horns, or bleating for the sweet rye-bread. The women knitted stockings, laughing among themselves, and singing all the while. As soon as we reached them they gathered round to talk. An old herdsman, who was clearly the patriarch of this Arcadia, asked us many questions in a slow, deliberate voice. We told him who we were, and tried to interest him in the cattle-plague, which he appeared to regard as an evil very unreal and far away—like the murrain upon Pharaoh's herds which one reads about in Exodus. But he was courteous and polite, doing the honors of his pasture with simplicity and ease. He took us to his chalet and gave us bowls of pure cold milk. It was a funny little wooden house, clean and dark. The sky peeped through its tiles, and if shepherds were not in the habit of sleeping soundly all night long they might count the setting and rising stars without lifting their heads from the pillow. He told us how far pleasanter they found the

summer season than the long, cold winter which they have to spend in gloomy houses in Cormayeur. This, indeed, is the true pastoral life which poets have described—a happy summer holiday among the flowers, well occupied with simple cares and harassed by “no enemy but winter and rough weather.”

Very much of the charm of Switzerland belongs to simple things—to greetings from the herdsmen, the “Guten Morgen” and “Guten Abend,” that are invariably given and taken upon mountain paths; to the tame creatures, with their large dark eyes, who raise their heads one moment from the pasture while you pass; and to the plants that grow beneath your feet. The latter end of May is the time when spring begins in the high Alps. Wherever sunlight smiles away a patch of snow the brown turf soon becomes green velvet, and the velvet stars itself with red and white and gold and blue. You almost see the grass and lilies grow. First come pale crocuses and lilac soldanellas. These break the last dissolving clods of snow, and stand upon an island, with the cold wall they have thawed all round them. It is the fate of these poor flowers to spring and flourish on the very skirts of retreating winter; they soon wither—the frilled chalice of the soldanella shrivels up and the crocus fades away before the grass has grown; the sun, which is bringing all the other plants to life, scorches their tender petals. Often, when summer has fairly come, you still may see their pearly cups and lilac bells by the side of avalanches, between the chill snow and the fiery sun, blooming and fading hour by hour. They have, as it were, but a Pisgah view of the promised land, of the spring which they are foremost to proclaim. Next come the clumsy gentians and yellow anemones, covered with soft down like fledgling birds. These are among the earliest and hardiest blossoms that embroider the high meadows with a diaper of blue and gold. About the same time primroses and auriculas begin to tuft the dripping rocks, while frail white fleurs-de-lis, like flakes of

snow forgotten by the sun, and golden-balled ranunculuses join with forget-me-nots and cranesbill in a never-ending dance upon the grassy floor. Happy, too, is he who finds the lilies-of-the-valley clustering about the chestnut-boles upon the Colma, or in the beechwood by the stream at Maugnaga, mixed with garnet-colored columbines and fragrant white narcissus, which the people of the villages call "Angiolini." There, too, is Solomon's-seal, with waxen bells and leaves expanded like the wings of hovering butterflies. But these lists of flowers are tiresome and cold; it would be better to draw the portrait of one which is particularly fascinating. I think that botanists have called it *Saxifraga coryledon*; yet, in spite of its long name, it is beautiful and poetic. London-pride is the commonest of all the saxifrages; but the one of which I speak is as different from London-pride as a Plantagenet upon his throne from that last Plantagenet who died obscure and penniless some years ago. It is a great majestic flower, which plumes the granite rocks of Monte Rosa in the spring. At other times of the year you see a little tuft of fleshy leaves set like a cushion on cold ledges and dark places of dripping cliffs. You take it for a stone-crop—one of those weeds doomed to obscurity and safe from being picked because they are so uninviting—and you pass it by incuriously. But about June it puts forth its power, and from the cushion of pale leaves there springs a strong pink stem, which rises upward for a while, and then curves down and breaks into a shower of snow-white blossoms. Far away the splendor gleams, hanging like a plume of ostrich-feathers from the roof of rock, waving to the wind, or stooping down to touch the water of the mountain-stream that dashes it with dew. The snow at evening, glowing with a sunset flush, is not more rosy-pure than this cascade of pendent blossoms. It loves to be alone—inaccessible ledges, chasms where winds combat, or moist caverns overarched near thundering falls, are the places that

it seeks. I will not compare it to a spirit of the mountains or to a proud, lonely soul, for such comparisons desecrate the simplicity of nature, and no simile can add a glory to the flower. It seems to have a conscious life of its own, so large and glorious it is, so sensitive to every breath of air, so nobly placed upon its bending stem, so royal in its solitude. I first saw it years ago on the Simplon, feathering the drizzling crags above Isella. Then we found it near Baveno, in a crack of sombre cliff beneath the mines. The other day we cut an armful opposite Varallo, by the Sesia, and then felt like murderers; it was so sad to hold in our hands the triumph of those many patient months, the full expansive life of the flower, the splendor visible from valleys and hill-sides, the defenceless creature which had done its best to make the gloomy places of the Alps most beautiful.

After passing many weeks among the high Alps it is a pleasure to descend into the plains. The sunset and sunrise and the stars of Lombardy, its level horizons and vague, misty distances are a source of absolute relief after the narrow skies and embarrassed prospects of a mountain valley. Nor are the Alps themselves ever more imposing than when seen from Milan or the church-tower of Chivasso or the terrace of Novara, with a foreground of Italian corn-fields and old city towers and rice-ground, golden-green beneath a Lombard sun. Half veiled by clouds, the mountains rise like visionary fortress walls of a celestial city—unapproachable, beyond the range of mortal feet. But those who know by old experience what friendly chalets and cool meadows and clear streams are hidden in their folds and valleys, send forth fond thoughts and messages, like carrier-pigeons, from the marble parapets of Milan, crying, "Before another sun has set I too shall rest beneath the shadow of their pines!" It is in truth not more than a day's journey from Milan to the brink of snow at Macugnaga. But very sad it is to *leave* the Alps, to stand upon the terraces of

Berne and waft ineffectual farewells. The unsympathizing Aar rushes beneath; and the snow-peaks, whom we love like friends, abide untroubled by the coming and the going of the world. The clouds drift over them—the sunset warms them with a fiery kiss. Night comes, and we are hurried far away to wake beside the Seine, remembering, with a pang of jealous passion, that the flowers on Alpine meadows are still blooming, and the rivulets still flowing with a ceaseless song, while Paris shops are all we see, and all we hear is the dull clatter of a Paris crowd.

THE ALPS IN WINTER.

The gradual approach of winter is very lovely in the high Alps. The valley of Davos, where I am writing, more than five thousand feet above the sea, is not beautiful, as Alpine valleys go, though it has scenery both picturesque and grand within easy reach. But when summer is passing into autumn, even the bare slopes of the least romantic glen are glorified. Golden lights and crimson are cast over the gray-green world by the fading of innumerable plants. Then the larches begin to put on fallow tints that deepen into orange, burning against the solid blue sky like amber. The frosts are severe at night, and the meadow grass turns dry and wan. The last lilac crocuses die upon the fields. Icicles, hanging from water-course or mill-wheel, glitter in the noonday sunlight. The wind blows keenly from the north, and now the snow begins to fall and thaw and freeze, and fall and thaw again. The seasons are confused; wonderful days of flawless purity are intermingled with storm and gloom. At last the time comes when a great snowfall has to be expected. There is hard frost in the early morning, and at nine o'clock the thermometer stands at two degrees. The sky is clear, but it clouds rapidly with films of cirrus and of stratus in the south and west. Soon it is covered over with gray vapor in a level sheet, all the hill-tops standing hard against the steely

heavens. The cold wind from the west freezes the mustache to one's pipe-stem. By noon the air is thick with a coagulated mist; the temperature meanwhile has risen, and a little snow falls at intervals. The valleys are filled with a curious opaque blue, from which the peaks rise, phantom-like and pallid, into the gray air, scarcely distinguishable from their background. The pine forests on the mountain-sides are of darkest indigo. There is an indescribable stillness and a sense of incubation. The wind has fallen. Later on, the snow-flakes flutter silently and sparsely through the lifeless air. The most distant landscape is quite blotted out. After sunset the clouds have settled down upon the hills, and the snow comes in thick, impenetrable fleeces. At night our hair crackles and sparkles when we brush it. Next morning there is a foot and a half of finely powdered snow, and still the snow is falling. Strangely loom the chalets through the semi-solid whiteness. Yet the air is now dry and singularly soothing. The pines are heavy with their wadded coverings; now and again one shakes himself in silence, and his burden falls in a white cloud, to leave a black-green patch upon the hill-side, whitening again as the imperturbable fall continues. The stakes by the roadside are almost buried. No sound is audible. Nothing is seen but the snow-plough, a long raft of planks with a heavy stone at its stem and a sharp prow, drawn by four strong horses, and driven by a young man erect upon the stem.

So we live through two days and nights, and on the third the north wind blows. The snow-clouds break and hang upon the hills in scattered fleeces; glimpses of blue sky shine through, and sunlight glints along the heavy masses. The blues of the shadows are everywhere intense. As the clouds disperse they form in moulded domes, tawny like sun-burnt marble in the distant south lands. Every chalet is a miracle of fantastic curves, built by the heavy hanging snow. Snow lies mounded on the roads and fields,

writhed into loveliest wreaths, or outspread in the softest undulations. All the irregularities of the hills are softened into swelling billows like the mouldings of Titanic statuary.

It happened once or twice last winter that such a clearing after snowfall took place at full moon. Then the moon rose in a swirl of fleecy vapor—clouds above, beneath, and all around. The sky was blue as steel, and infinitely deep with mist-entangled stars. The horn above which she first appears stood carved of solid black, and through the valley's length from end to end yawned chasms and clefts of liquid darkness. As the moon rose the clouds were conquered and massed into rolling waves upon the ridges of the hills. The spaces of open sky grew still more blue. At last the silver light came flooding over all, and here and there the fresh snow glistened on the crags. There is movement, palpitation, life of light through earth and sky. To walk out on such a night, when the perturbation of storm is over and the heavens are free, is one of the greatest pleasures offered by this winter life. It is so light that you can read the smallest print with ease. The upper sky looks quite black, shading by violet and sapphire into turquoise upon the horizon. There is the color of ivory upon the nearest snow-fields, and the distant peaks sparkle like silver; crystals glitter in all directions on the surface of the snow, white, yellow, and pale blue. The stars are exceedingly keen, but only a few can shine in the intensity of moonlight. The air is perfectly still, and though icicles may be hanging from beard and mustache to the furs beneath one's chin, there is no sensation of extreme cold.

During the earlier frosts of the season, after the first snows have fallen, but when there is still plenty of moisture in the ground, the loveliest fern-fronds of pure rime may be found in myriads on the meadows. They are fashioned like perfect vegetable structures, opening fan-shaped upon crystal stems, and catching the sun-

beams with the brilliancy of diamonds. Taken at certain angles, they decompose light into iridescent colors, appearing now like emeralds, rubies, or topazes, and now like Labrador spar, blending all hues in a wondrous sheen. When the lake freezes for the first time its surface is of course quite black, and so transparent that it is easy to see the fishes swimming in the deep beneath; but here and there, where rime has fallen, there sparkle these fantastic flowers and ferns and mosses made of purest frost. Nothing, indeed, can be more fascinating than the new world revealed by frost. In shaded places of the valley you may walk through larches and leafless alder thickets by silent farms all silvered over with hoar spangles—fairy forests, where the flowers and foliage are rime. The streams are flowing half-frozen over rocks sheeted with opaque green ice. Here it is strange to watch the swirl of water freeing itself from these frost-shackles, and to see it eddying beneath the overhanging eaves of frailest crystal-frosted snow. All is so silent, still, and weird in this white world that one marvels when the spirit of winter will appear, or what shrill voices in the air will make his unimaginable magic audible. Nothing happens, however, to disturb the charm, save when a sunbeam cuts the chain of diamonds on an alder-bough, and down they drift in a thin cloud of dust. It may be, also, that the air is full of floating crystals, like tiniest most restless fire-flies rising and falling and passing crosswise in the sun-illuminated shade of tree or mountain-side.

It is not easy to describe these beauties of the winter-world; and yet one word must be said about the sunsets. Let us walk out, therefore, towards the lake at four o'clock in mid-December. The thermometer is standing at three degrees, and there is neither breath of wind nor cloud. Venus is just visible in rose and sapphire, and the thin young moon is beside her. To east and south the snowy ranges burn with yellow fire, deepening to orange and crimson

hues, which die away and leave a greenish pallor. At last, the higher snows alone are livid with a last faint tinge of light, and all beneath is quite white. But the tide of glory turns. While the west grows momentarily more pale, the eastern heavens flush with after-glow, suffuse their spaces with pink and violet. Daffodil and tenderest emerald intermingle; and these colors spread until the west again has rose and primrose and sapphire wonderfully blended, and from the burning skies a light is cast upon the valley—a phantom light, less real, more like the hues of molten gems, than were the stationary flames of sunset. Venus and the moon meanwhile are silvery clear. Then the whole illumination fades like magic.

All the charms of which I have been writing are combined in a sledge-drive. With an arrowy gliding motion one passes through the snow-world as through a dream. In the sunlight the snow surface sparkles with its myriad stars of crystals. In the shadow it ceases to glitter, and assumes a blueness scarcely less blue than the sky. So the journey is like sailing through alternate tracts of light irradiate heavens, and interstellar spaces of the clearest and most flawless ether. The air is like the keen air of the highest glaciers. As we go, the bells keep up a drowsy tinkling at the horse's head. The whole landscape is transfigured—lifted high up out of commonplaceness. The little hills are Monte Rosas and Mont Blancs. Scale is annihilated, and nothing tells but form. There is hardly any color except the blue of sky and shadow. Everything is traced in vanishing tints, passing from the almost amber of the distant sunlight through glowing white into pale grays and brighter blues and deep ethereal azure. The pines stand in black platoons upon the hill-sides, with a tinge of red or orange on their sable. Some carry masses of snow. Others have shaken their plumes free. The châteaux are like fairy houses or toys, waist-deep in stores of winter fuel. With their mellow

tones of madder and umber on the weather-beaten woodwork relieved against the white, with fantastic icicles and folds of snow depending from their eaves, or curled like coverlets from roof and window-sill, they are far more picturesque than in the summer. Color, wherever it is found, whether in these cottages or in a block of serpentine by the road-side, or in the golden bulrush blades by the lake shore, takes more than double value. It is shed upon the landscape like a spiritual and transparent veil. Most beautiful of all are the sweeping lines of pure, untroubled snow, fold over fold of undulating softness, billowing along the skirts of the peaked hills. There is no conveying the charm of immaterial, aerial, lucid beauty, the feeling of purity and aloofness from sordid things conveyed by the fine touch on all our senses of light, color, form, and air, and motion, and rare tinkling sound. The magic is like a spirit mood of Shelley's lyric verse. And, what is perhaps most wonderful, this delicate delight may be enjoyed without fear in the coldest weather. It does not matter how low the temperature may be, if the sun is shining, the air dry, and the wind asleep.

Leaving the horse-sledges on the verge of some high hill-road, and trusting one's self to the little hand-sledge which the people of the Grisons use, and which the English have christened by the Canadian term "*toboggan*," the excitement becomes far greater. The hand-sledge is about three feet long, fifteen inches wide, and half a foot above the ground, on runners shod with iron. Seated firmly at the back, and guiding with the feet in front, the rider skims down precipitous slopes and round perilous corners with a rapidity that beats a horse's pace. Winding through sombre pine forests, where the torrent roars fitfully among caverns of barbed ice, and the glistening mountains tower above in their glory of sun-smitten snow, darting round the frozen ledges at the turnings of the road, silently gliding at a speed that seems in-

credible, it is so smooth, he traverses two or three miles without fatigue, carried onward by the mere momentum of his weight. It is a strange and great joy. The toboggan, under these conditions, might be compared to an enchanted boat shooting the rapids of a river; and what adds to its fascination is the entire loneliness in which the rider passes through those weird and ever-shifting scenes of winter radiance. Sometimes, when the snow is drifting up the pass, and the world is blank behind, before, and all around, it seems like plunging into chaos. The muffled pines loom fantastically through the drift as we rush past them, and the wind ever and anon detaches great masses of snow in clouds from their bent branches. Or again at night, when the moon is shining, and the sky is full of flaming stars, and the snow, frozen to the hardness of marble, sparkles with innumerable crystals, a new sense of strangeness and of joy is given to the solitude, the swiftness, and the silence of the exercise. No other circumstances invest the poetry of rapid motion with more fascination. Shelley, who so loved the fancy of a boat inspired with its own instinct of life, would have delighted in the game, and would probably have pursued it recklessly. At the same time, as practised on a humbler scale nearer home, in company, and on a run selected for convenience rather than for picturesqueness, tobogganning is a very Bohemian amusement. No one who indulges in it can count on avoiding hard blows and violent upsets, nor will his efforts to maintain his equilibrium at the dangerous corners be invariably graceful.

Nothing, it might be imagined, could be more monotonous than an Alpine valley covered up with snow. And yet to one who has passed many months in that seclusion Nature herself presents no monotony; for the changes constantly wrought by light and cloud and alternations of weather on this landscape are infinitely various. The very simplicity of the conditions seems to assist the supreme

artist. One day is wonderful because of its unsullied purity ; not a cloud visible, and the pines clothed in velvet of rich green beneath a faultless canopy of light. The next presents a fretwork of fine film, wrought by the south wind over the whole sky, iridescent with delicate rainbow tints within the influences of the sun, and ever changing shape. On another, when the turbulent *Föhn* is blowing, streamers of snow may be seen flying from the higher ridges against a pallid background of slaty cloud, while the gaunt ribs of the hills glisten below with fitful gleams of lurid light. At sunrise, one morning, stealthy and mysterious vapors clothe the mountains from their basement to the waist, while the peaks are glistening serenely in clear daylight. Another opens with silently falling snow. A third is rosy through the length and breadth of the dawn-smitten valley. It is, however, impossible to catalogue the indescribable variety of those beauties which those who love nature may enjoy by simply waiting on the changes of the winter in a single station of the Alps.

OLD TOWNS OF PROVENCE.

TRAVELLERS journeying southward from Paris first meet with olive-trees near Montdragon or Montélimart—little towns, with old historic names, upon the road to Orange. It is here that we begin to feel ourselves within the land of Provence, where the Romans found a second Italy, and where the autumn of their antique civilization was followed, almost without an intermediate winter of barbarism, by the light and delicate spring-time of romance. Orange itself is full of Rome. Indeed, the ghost of the dead empire seems there to be more real and living than the actual flesh and blood of modern time, as represented by narrow dirty streets and mean churches. It is the shell of the huge theatre, hollowed from the solid hill, and fronted with a wall that seems made rather to protect a city than to form a sounding-board for a stage, which first tells us that we have reached the old Arausio. Of all theatres this is the most impressive, stupendous, indestructible, the Colosseum hardly excepted; for in Rome herself we are prepared for something gigantic, while in the insignificant Aransio—a sort of antique Tewkesbury—to find such magnificence, durability, and vastness, impresses one with a nightmare sense that the old lioness of Empire can scarcely yet be dead. Standing before the colossal, towering, amorphous precipice which formed the background of the scena, we feel as if once more the “heart-shaking sound of Consul Romanus” might be heard; as if Roman knights and deputies, arisen from the dead, with faces hard and stern as those of the warriors carved on Trajan’s frieze, might take their seats beneath us in the orchestra, and, after proc-

lamation made, the mortmain of imperial Rome be laid upon the comforts, liberties, and little gracefulnesses of our modern life. Nor is it unpleasant to be startled from such revery by the voice of the old guardian upon the stage beneath, sonorously devolving the vacuous Alexandrines with which he once welcomed his ephemeral French emperor from Algiers. The little man is dim with distance, eclipsed and swallowed up by the shadows and grotesque fragments of the ruin in the midst of which he stands. But his voice—thanks to the inimitable constructive art of the ancient architect, which, even in the desolation of at least thirteen centuries, has not lost its cunning—emerges from the pigmy throat, and fills the whole vast hollow with its clear, if tiny, sound. Thank Heaven, there is no danger of Roman resurrection here! The illusion is completely broken, and we turn to gather the first violets of February, and to wonder at the quaint postures of a praying mantis on the grass-grown tiers and porches fringed with fern.

The sense of Roman greatness which is so oppressive in Orange and in many other parts of Provence, is not felt at Avignon. Here we exchange the ghost of Imperial for the phantom of Ecclesiastical Rome. The fixed epithet of Avignon is papal; and as the express train rushes over its bleak and wind-tormented plain, the heavy dungeon-walls and battlemented towers of its palace fortress seem to warn us off, and bid us quickly leave the Babylon of exiled impious Antichrist. Avignon presents the bleakest, barest, grayest scene upon a February morning, when the incessant *mistral* is blowing, and far and near, upon desolate hill-side and sandy plain, the scanty trees are bent sideways, the crumbling castle turrets shivering like bleached skeletons in the dry, ungenial air. Yet inside the town all is not so dreary. The papal palace, with its terrible Glacière, its chapel painted by Simone Memmi, its endless corridors and staircases, its torture-chamber, funnel-

shaped to drown and suffocate—so runs tradition—the shrieks of wretches on the rack, is now a barrack filled with lively little French soldiers, whose politeness, though sorely taxed, is never ruffled by the introduction of inquisitive visitors into their dormitories, eating-places, and drill-grounds. And strange, indeed, it is to see the lines of neat narrow barrack beds, between which the red-legged little men are shaving, polishing their guns, or mending their trousers, in those vaulted halls of popes and cardinals, those vast presence-chambers and audience-galleries, where Urban entertained St. Catherine, where Rienzi came, a prisoner, to be stared at. Pass by the Glacière with a shudder, for it has still the reek of blood about it; and do not long delay in the cheerless dungeon of Rienzi. Time and regimental whitewash have swept these lurking-places of old crime very bare; but the parable of the seven devils is true in more senses than one, and the ghosts that return to haunt a deodorized, disinfected, garnished sepulchre are almost more ghastly than those which have never been disturbed from their old habitations.

Little by little the eye becomes accustomed to the bareness and grayness of this Provençal landscape; and then we find that the scenery round Avignon is eminently picturesque. The view from Les Doms—which is a hill above the Pope's palace, the Acropolis, as it were, of Avignon—embraces a wide stretch of undulating champaign bordered by low hills and intersected by the flashing waters of the majestic Rhone. Across the stream stands Villeneuve, like a castle of romance, with its round stone towers fronting the gates and battlemented walls of the papal city. A bridge used to connect the two towns, but it is now broken. The remaining fragment is of solid build, resting on great buttresses, one of which rises fantastically above the bridge into a little chapel. Such, one might fancy, was the bridge which Ariosto's Rodomonte kept on horse against the Paladins of Charlemagne,

when angered by the loss of his love. Nor is it difficult to imagine Bradamante spurring up the slope against him with her magic lance in rest, and tilting him into the tawny waves beneath.

On a clear October morning, when the vineyards are taking their last tints of gold and crimson, and the yellow foliage of the poplars by the river mingles with the sober grays of olive-trees and willows, every square inch of this landscape, glittering as it does with light and with color, the more beautiful for its subtlety and rarity, would make a picture. Out of many such vignettes let us choose one. We are on the shore close by the ruined bridge, the rolling, muddy Rhone in front; beyond it, by the towing-path, a tall, strong cypress-tree rises beside a little house, and next to it a crucifix twelve feet or more in height, the Christ visible afar stretched upon his red cross; arundo donax is waving all around, and willows near; behind, far off, soar the peaked hills, blue and pearly with clouds; past the cypress, on the Rhone, comes floating a long raft, swift through the stream, its rudder guided by a score of men: one standing erect upon the prow bends forward to salute the cross; on flies the raft, the tall reeds rustle, and the cypress sleeps.

For those who have time to spare in going to or from the South it is worth while to spend a day or two in the most comfortable and characteristic of old French inns, the Hôtel de l'Europe, at Avignon. Should it rain, the museum of the town is worth a visit. It contains Horace Vernet's not uncelebrated picture of Mazeppa, and another, less famous, but perhaps more interesting, by swollen-cheeked David, the "genius in convulsion," as Carlyle has christened him. His canvas is unfinished. Who knows what cry of the Convention made the painter fling his palette down and leave the masterpiece he might have spoiled? For in its way the picture *is* a masterpiece. There lies Jean Barrad, drum-

mer, aged fourteen, slain in La Vendée, a true patriot, who, while his life-blood flowed away, pressed the tricolor cockade to his heart, and murmured "Liberty!" David has treated his subject classically. The little drummer-boy, though French enough in feature and in feeling, lies, Greek-like, naked on the sand—a very Hyacinth of the Republic, La Vendée's Ilioneus. The tricolor cockade and the sentiment of upturned patriotic eyes are the only indications of his being a hero in his teens, a citizen who thought it sweet to die for France.

In fine weather a visit to Vaucluse should by no means be omitted, not so much, perhaps, for Petrarch's sake as for the interest of the drive, and for the marvel of the fountain of the Sorgues. For some time after leaving Avignon you jog along the level country between avenues of plane-trees; then comes a hilly ridge, on which the olives, mulberries, and vineyards join their colors and melt subtly into distant purple. After crossing this we reach L'Isle, an island village girdled by the gliding Sorgues, overshadowed with gigantic plane-boughs, and echoing to the splash of water dripped from mossy fern-tufted mill-wheels. Those who expect Petrarch's Sorgues to be some trickling poet's rill emerging from a damp grotto may well be astounded at the rush and roar of this azure river so close upon its fountain-head. It has a volume and an arrow-like rapidity that communicate the feeling of exuberance and life. In passing, let it not be forgotten that it was somewhere or other in this "*chiaro fondo di Sorga*," as Carlyle describes, that Jourdain, the hangman-hero of the Glacière, stuck fast upon his pony when flying from his foes, and had his accursed life, by some diabolical providence, spared for future butcheries. On we go across the austere plain, between fields of madder, the red roots of the "*garance*" lying in swaths along the furrows. In front rise ash-gray hills of barren rock, here and there crimsoned with the leaves of the dwarf sumach. A

huge cliff stands up and seems to bar all passage. Yet the river foams in torrents at our side. Whence can it issue? What pass or cranny in that precipice is cloven for its escape? These questions grow in interest as we enter the narrow defile of limestone rocks which leads to the cliff-barrier, and find ourselves among the figs and olives of Vaucluse. Here is the village, the little church, the ugly column to Petrarch's memory, the inn, with its caricatures of Laura, and its excellent trout, the bridge and the many-flashing, eddying Sorgues, lashed by mill-wheels, broken by weirs, divided in its course, channelled and diked, yet flowing irresistibly and undefiled. Blue, purple, greened by moss and water-weeds, silvered by snow-white pebbles, on its pure smooth bed the river runs like elemental diamond, so clear and fresh. The rocks on either side are gray or yellow, terraced into olive-yards, with here and there a cypress, fig, or mulberry tree. Soon the gardens cease, and lentisk, rosemary, box, and ilex—shrubs of Provence—with here and there a sumach out of reach, cling to the hard stone. And so at last we are brought face to face with the sheer impassable precipice. At its basement sleeps a pool, perfectly untroubled: a lakelet in which the sheltering rocks and nestling wild figs are glassed as in a mirror—a mirror of blue-black water, like amethyst or fluor-spar—so pure, so still, that where it laps the pebbles you can scarcely say where air begins and water ends. This, then, is Petrarch's "grotto;" this is the fountain of Vaucluse. Up from its deep reservoirs, from the mysterious basements of the mountain, wells the silent stream; pauseless and motionless it fills its urn, rises unruffled, glides until the brink is reached, then overflows, and foams, and dashes noisily, a cataract, among the boulders of the hills. Nothing at Vaucluse is more impressive than the contrast between the tranquil silence of the fountain and the roar of the released impetuous river. Here we can realize the calm clear eyes of sculptured water-gods,

their brimming urns, their gushing streams, the magic of the mountain-born and darkness-cradled flood. Or again, looking up at the sheer steep cliff, eight hundred feet in height, and arching slightly roofwise, so that no rain falls upon the cavern of the pool, we seem to see the stroke of Neptune's trident, the hoof of Pegasus, the force of Moses' rod, which cleft rocks and made waters gush forth in the desert. There is a strange fascination in the spot. As our eyes follow the white pebble which cleaves the surface and falls visibly, until the veil of azure is too thick for sight to pierce, we feel as if some glamour were drawing us, like Hylas, to the hidden caves. At least, we long to yield a prized and precious offering to the spring, to grace the nymph of Vaucluse with a pearl of price as token of our reverence and love.

Meanwhile nothing has been said about Petrarch, who himself said much about the spring, and complained against these very nymphs to whom we have in wish, at least, been scattering jewels, that they broke his banks and swallowed up his gardens every winter. At Vaucluse Petrarch loved and lived and sang. He has made Vaucluse famous, and will never be forgotten there. But for the present the fountain is even more attractive than the memory of the poet.*

The change from Avignon to Nîmes is very trying to the latter place; for Nîmes is not picturesquely or historically interesting. It is a prosperous modern French town with two almost perfect Roman monuments—Les Arènes and the Maison Carrée. The amphitheatre is a complete oval, visible at one glance. Its smooth white stone, even where it has not been restored, seems unimpaired by age; and Charles Martel's conflagration, when he burned the Saracen hornet's nest inside it, has only blackened the

* I have translated and printed at the end of this essay some sonnets of Petrarch as a kind of palinode for this impertinence.

outer walls and arches venerably. Utility and perfect adaptation of means to ends form the beauty of Roman buildings. The science of construction and large intelligence displayed in them, their strength, simplicity, solidity, and purpose are their glory. Perhaps there is only one modern edifice—Palladio's Palazzo della Ragione at Vicenza—which approaches the dignity and loftiness of Roman architecture; and this it does because of its absolute freedom from ornament, the vastness of its design, and the durability of its material. The temple, called the *Maison Carrée*, at Nîmes, is also very perfect, and comprehended at one glance. Light, graceful, airy, but rather thin and narrow, it reminds one of the temple of Fortuna Virilis at Rome.

But if Nîmes itself is not picturesque, its environs contain the wonderful Pont du Gard. A two or three hours' drive leads through a desolate country to the valley of the Gardon, where suddenly, at a turn of the road, one comes upon the aqueduct. It is not within the scope of words to describe the impression produced by those vast arches, row above row, cutting the deep blue sky. The domed summer clouds sailing across them are comprehended in the gigantic span of their perfect semicircles, which seem rather to have been described by Miltonic compasses of deity than by merely human mathematics. Yet, standing beneath one of the vaults and looking upward, you may read Roman numerals in order from I. to X., which prove their human origin well enough. Next to their strength, regularity, and magnitude, the most astonishing point about this triple tier of arches, piled one above the other to a height of one hundred and eighty feet above a brawling stream beneath two barren hills, is their lightness. The arches are not thick; the causeway on the top is only just broad enough for three men to walk abreast. So smooth and perpendicular are the supporting walls that scarcely a shrub or tuft of grass has grown upon the aqueduct in all these years.

And yet the huge fabric is strengthened by no buttress, has needed no repair. This lightness of structure, combined with such prodigious durability, produces the strongest sense of science and self-reliant power in the men who designed it. None but Romans could have built such a monument and have set it in such a place—a wilderness of rock and rolling hill scantily covered with low brushwood and browsed over by a few sheep—for such a purpose, too, in order to supply Nemausus with pure water. The modern town does pretty well without its water; but here subsists the civilization of eighteen centuries past intact: the human labor yet remains, the measuring, contriving mind of man, shrinking from no obstacles, spanning the air, and in one edifice combining gigantic strength and perfect beauty. It is impossible not to echo Rousseau's words in such a place, and to say with him: “Le retentissement de mes pas dans ces immenses voûtes me faisait croire entendre la forte voix de ceux qui les avaient bâties. Je me perdais comme un insecte dans cette immensité. Je sentais, tout en me faisant petit, je ne sais quoi qui m'élevait l'âme; et je me disais en soupirant, Que ne suis-je né Romain!”

There is nothing at Arles which produces the same deep and indelible impression. Yet Arles is a far more interesting town than Nîmes, partly because of the Rhone delta which begins there, partly because of its ruinous antiquity, and partly also because of the strong local character of its population. The amphitheatre of Arles is vaster and more sublime in its desolation than the tidy theatre at Nîmes; the crypts and dens and subterranean passages suggest all manner of speculation as to the uses to which they may have been appropriated; while the broken galleries outside, intricate and black and cavernous, like Piranesi's etchings of the “Carceri,” present the wildest pictures of greatness in decay, fantastic dilapidation. The ruins of the smaller

theatre, again, with their picturesquely grouped fragments and their standing columns, might be sketched for a frontispiece to some dilettante work on classical antiquities. For the rest, perhaps the Aliscamps, or ancient Roman burial-ground, is the most interesting thing at Arles, not only because of Dante's celebrated lines in the canto of *Farinata* :

Si come ad Arli ove 'l Rodano stagna,
Fanno i sepolcri tutto 'l loco varo ;

but also because of the intrinsic picturesqueness of this avenue of sepulchres beneath green trees upon a long, soft grassy field.

But as at Avignon and Nîmes, so also at Arles, one of the chief attractions of the place lies at a distance, and requires a special expedition. The road to Les Baux crosses a true Provençal desert, where one realizes the phrase, "Vieux comme les rochers de Provence"—a wilderness of gray stone, here and there worn into cart-tracks, and tufted with rosemary, box, lavender, and lentisk. On the way it passes the Abbaye de Mont Majeur, a ruin of gigantic size, embracing all periods of architecture, where nothing seems to flourish now but henbane and the wild cucumber, or to breathe but a mumble-toothed and terrible old hag. The ruin stands above a desolate marsh, its vast Italian buildings of Palladian splendor looking more forlorn in their decay than the older and austerer mediæval towers which rise up proud and patient and defiantly erect beneath the curse of time. When, at length, what used to be the castle town of Les Baux is reached, you find a naked mountain of yellow sandstone, worn away by nature into bastions and buttresses and coigns of vantage, sculptured by ancient art into palaces and chapels, battlements and dungeons. Now art and nature are confounded in one ruin. Blocks of masonry lie cheek-by-jowl with masses of the rough-hewn rock ; fallen cavern vaults are heaped round fragments of

fan-shaped spandrel and clustered column-shaft; the doors and windows of old pleasure-rooms are hung with ivy and wild fig for tapestry; winding staircases start midway upon the cliff, and lead to vacancy. High overhead, suspended in mid-air, hang chambers—lady's bower or poet's singing-room—now inaccessible, the haunt of hawks and swallows. Within this rocky honeycomb—"cette ville en monolithe," as it has been aptly called, for it is literally scooped out of one mountain block—live about two hundred poor people, foddering their wretched goats at carved piscina and stately sideboards, erecting mud-beplastered hovels in the halls of feudal princes. Murray is wrong in calling the place a mediæval town in its original state, for anything more purely ruinous, more like a decayed old cheese, cannot possibly be conceived. The living only inhabit the tombs of the dead. At the end of the last century, when revolutionary effervescence was beginning to ferment, the people of Arles swept all its feudality away, defacing the very arms upon the town-gate, and trampling the palace towers to dust.

The castle looks out across a vast extent of plain over Arles, the stagnant Rhone, the Camargue, and the salt-pools of the lingering sea. In old days it was the eyrie of an eagle race called Seigneurs of Les Baux; and whether they took their title from the rock, or whether, as genealogists would have it, they gave the name of Oriental Balthazar—their reputed ancestor, one of the Magi—to the rock itself, remains a mystery not greatly worth the solving.

Anyhow, here they lived and flourished, these feudal princes, bearing for their ensign a silver comet of sixteen rays upon a field of gules—themselves a comet race, baleful to the neighboring lowlands, blazing with lurid splendor over wide tracts of country, a burning, raging, fiery-souled, swift-handed tribe, in whom a flame unquenchable glowed from son to sire through twice five

hundred years, until, in the sixteenth century, they were burned out, and nothing remained but cinders—these broken ruins of their eyrie, and some outworn and dusty titles. Very strange are the fate and history of these same titles: King of Arles, for instance, savoring of troubadour and high romance; Prince of Tarentum smacking of old plays and Italian novels; Prince of Orange, which the Nassaus, through the Châlons, seized in all its emptiness long after the real principality had passed away, and came therewith to sit on England's throne.

The Les Baux in their heyday were patterns of feudal nobility. They warred incessantly with counts of Provence, archbishops and burghers of Arles, queens of Naples, kings of Aragon. Crusading, pillaging, betraying, spending their substance on the sword, and buying it again by deeds of valor or imperial acts of favor, tuning troubadour harps, presiding at courts of love, they filled a large page in the history of Southern France. The Les Baux were very superstitious. In the fulness of their prosperity they restricted the number of their dependent towns, or *places baus-senques*, to seventy-nine, because these numbers in combination were thought to be of good omen to their house. Beral des Baux, Seigneur of Marseilles, was one day starting on a journey with his whole force to Avignon. He met an old woman herb-gathering at daybreak, and said, "Mother, hast thou seen a crow or other bird?" "Yea," answered the crone, "on the trunk of a dead willow." Beral counted upon his fingers the day of the year, and turned bridle. With troubadours of name and note they had dealings, but not always to their own advantage, as the following story testifies. When the Baux and Berengers were struggling for the countship of Provence, Raymond Berenger, by his wife's counsel, went, attended by troubadours, to meet the Emperor Frederick at Milan. There he sued for the investiture and ratification of Provence. His troubadours sang and charmed Fred-

erick ; and the emperor, for the joy he had in them, wrote his celebrated lines beginning—

Plas mi cavalier Francez.

And when Berenger made his request he met with no refusal. Hearing thereof, the lords of Baux came down in wrath with a clangor of armed men. But music had already gained the day ; and where the Phæbus of Provence had shone, the Æolus of storm-shaken Les Baux was powerless. Again, when Blacas, a knight of Provence, died, the great Sordello chanted one of his most fiery hymns, bidding the princes of Christendom flock round and eat the heart of the dead lord. “ Let Rambaude des Baux,” cries the bard, with a sarcasm that is clearly meant, but at this distance almost unintelligible, “ take also a good piece, for she is fair and good and truly virtuous ; let her keep it well who knows so well to husband her own weal.” But the poets were not always adverse to the house of Baux. Fouquet, the beautiful and gentle melodist whom Dante placed in paradise, served Adelaïs, wife of Berald, with long service of unhappy love, and wrote upon her death *The Complaint of Berald des Baux for Adelaïs*. Guillaume de Cabestan loved Berangère des Baux, and was so loved by her that she gave him a philter to drink, whereof he sickened and grew mad. Many more troubadours are cited as having frequented the castle of Les Baux, and among the members of the princely house were several poets.

Some of them were renowned for beauty. We hear of a Cécile, called Passe Rose, because of her exceeding loveliness ; also of an unhappy François, who, after passing eighteen years in prison, yet won the grace and love of Joan of Naples by his charms. But the real temper of this fierce tribe was not shown among troubadours, or in the courts of love and beauty. The stern and barren rock from which they sprang and the comet of their escutch-

con are the true symbols of their nature. History records no end of their ravages and slaughters. It is a tedious catalogue of blood—how one prince put to fire and sword the whole town of Courthezon; how another was stabbed in prison by his wife; how a third besieged the castle of his niece, and sought to undermine her chamber, knowing her the while to be in childbed; how a fourth was flayed alive outside the walls of Avignon. There is nothing terrible, splendid, and savage belonging to feudal history of which an example may not be found in the annals of Les Baux, as narrated by their chronicler, Jules Canonge.

However abrupt may seem the transition from these memories of the ancient nobles of Les Baux to mere matters of travel and picturesqueness, it would be impossible to take leave of the old towns of Provence without glancing at the cathedrals of St. Trophime at Arles, and of St. Gilles—a village on the border of the dreary flamingo-haunted Camargue. Both of these buildings have porches splendidly incrustured with sculptures, half-classical, half-mediæval, marking the transition from ancient to modern art. But that of St. Gilles is by far the richer and more elaborate. The whole façade of this church is one mass of intricate decoration; Norman arches and carved lions, like those of Lombard architecture, mingling fantastically with Greek scrolls of fruits and flowers, with elegant Corinthian columns jutting out upon the church steps, and with the old conventional wave-border that is called Etruscan in our modern jargon. From the midst of florid fret and foliage lean mild faces of saints and Madonnas. Symbols of evangelists with half-human, half-animal eyes and wings are interwoven with the leafy bowers of Cupids. Grave apostles stand erect beneath acanthus-wreaths that ought to crisp the forehead of a laughing Faun or Bacchus. And yet so full, exuberant, and deftly chosen are these various elements that there remains no sense of incongruity or discord. The mediæval spirit had much

trouble to disentangle itself from classic reminiscences; and fortunately for the picturesqueness of St. Gilles, it did not succeed. How strangely different is the result of this transition in the South from those severe and rigid forms which we call Romanesque in Germany and Normandy : and England !

APPENDIX.

BLANK VERSE.

I.

PREFATORY NOTE.

A SENTENCE in the essay on England's literary debt to Italy (see vol. i. p. 105) furnishes me with a pretext for reprinting two separate studies on Blank Verse.* They were composed with a view to illustrating the rhetoric rather than the prosody of this metre, on the conviction that though blank verse is an iambic rhythm, it owes its beauty to the liberties taken with the normal structure. The licenses allowed themselves in this metre by great masters of versification may be explained, I think, invariably when we note the accent required by the rhetorical significance of their abnormal lines.

It can fairly be argued, however, that with this end in view I have paid too little attention to the prosody of blank verse, or, in other words, to its scansion by feet. In order to meet this objection, some prefatory remarks may here be offered upon the difficult question of quantity and accent.

We are accustomed, roughly speaking, to say that ancient me-

* I have not attempted to avoid repetitions in this Appendix. Its three parts were written at intervals during the last ten years, and two of them have been separately published. My purpose will be sufficiently served by a simple reprint, and I trust that the reader will not be fatigued by occasional recapitulation of the points I have sought to establish.

tre depends on quantity, and modern metre on accent. The names dactyl, spondee, trochee, etc., were invented in the analysis of Greek metres to express certain combinations of long and short syllables, without reference to pitch or emphasis. But when we speak of quantity in English metre, we mean the more or less accentuation of syllables. Thus an English trochee is a foot in which the first syllable is more accentuated than the second; an iamb is the contrary. In the transition from the ancient to the modern world the sense of quantity seems to have been lost, and its values were replaced by accent. We find, for example, in the watch-song of the Modenese soldiers, which can be referred to a period about the middle of the tenth century, such iambs as the following:

Divina mundi rex Christe custodia,
Sub tua serva hæc castra vigilia.

Both lines have an accentual as well as a quantitative trochee in the fourth place. In the second line the accents on the first syllable of *tua*, and on the second syllable of *vigilia*, which would have been too slight to lengthen them for a classical bar, are allowed to supply the place of quantity.

If Latin verses could thus be written without attention to quantity, this shows that the feeling for it had expired; and even at a period which may still be called classical the gradual blunting of the sensibility can be traced in the shortening of vowel sounds. It will suffice to quote the following hexameter:

Cætera mando focus spernunt quæ dentes acuti.

The Pompeian *graffiti* prove abundantly that, among the common people at any rate, it had never been acute; and we are led to the conclusion that scansion by quantity in Latin was an artificial refinement, agreeable to highly educated ears. When, therefore, we proceed to state that English lines ignore quantity, we mean that the cultivated feeling for the relative values of long and short syllables has never been sufficiently vivid with us to

make us particular about preserving them. We are satisfied with the values afforded by accentuation, though there is no doubt that verses can be written with correct accentuation which shall also preserve quantity in the classic sense. Tennyson's experiments in alcaics, hendecasyllabics, and sapphics suffice for proof. The difference between us and the cultivated ancients in this respect may in a measure be due to our comparatively negligent pronunciation. For instance, we do not pronounce the word *mella* as the Italians do, so as to give the full value to both *l*'s. We have not trained our ear to require, or our vocal organs to make, that delicate differentiation of syllables according to their spelling—in other words, to separate instead of slurring the component parts of speech—on which quantity depends. These considerations lead to a theory of metrical analysis which may be offered with some diffidence.

The laws of metre are to be found in the natural rhythm of words; for each word in every language has its own rhythmical form. This natural rhythm is expressed in pronunciation, and is determined by the greater or less time consumed in the enunciation of the syllables. Quantity and accent distinguish two conditions of this expenditure. Quantity, apart from accent, is the measure of time, lengthened or abbreviated, necessary for the due articulation of the component parts of language. Thus, generally speaking, a long syllable is one in which double vowels, or a vowel before accumulated consonants, demand a full time for their utterance; a short syllable is one in which a single vowel or a vowel before a simple consonant may be uttered in a half-time. *Me* (double *e*) and *tunc* are long; *que* (single *e*) and *sub* are short. It is agreed, apparently, in European metres to take account only of full and half times; yet much of the more subtle rhythmical effects depends upon the relative values of syllables which can only be conventionally regarded as not exceeding or falling short of one of the two limitations. Not every long is of exactly equal length. Not every short is of exactly equal brevity. Accent is indifferently used to indicate two separate conditions. It is either

the measure of intonation, heightened or lowered, or else it is enforced utterance. Of the former sort of accent, or pitch, which probably played an important part in Greek versification, no account need at present be taken. The latter, or *ictus*, has the effect of quantity, inasmuch as it renders more time needful for the stress laid upon the syllable—the accumulated volume of sound requiring a greater effort of the vocal organs, and consequently a retarded utterance. Every word, then, in articulation is subject to conditions of time, implying what we call quantity and accent; and in many words quantity is hardly distinguishable from accent. Thus, in the line

Tityre tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi,

the quantity of *Tityre* can be represented either as a double vowel followed by two simple vowels, requiring a time and two half-times for enunciation, or else as an ante-penultimate accent. Without pursuing this analysis into further details, it may be possible to define quantity as enunciation retarded or accelerated by the greater or less simplicity of the sound to be formed by the vocal organs; accent as the retardation of a simple sound by the increased effort of the vocal organs needed for marking the ictus. They are both, so to speak, in the category of time; and, though it is necessary to distinguish them, it should not be forgotten that their importance in prosody is due to the divisions and subdivisions of time they represent.

The consideration of pause and elision will help to illustrate these definitions. When two strong consonants have to be pronounced together, there must always be a pause between them, and with the pause an expenditure of time. That is the secret of the quantity ascribed to the preceding vowel. Thus *amor* in *amor est* has the value of \sim , because no pause is needed, no second consonantal sound being produced after its pronunciation; in *amor dans* it has the value of \sim —, because a fresh consonant has to be formed. The English do not mark this pause clearly. In other words, they do not give full value to each consonant, es-

pecially when the same letter is repeated. The Italians do: the first syllable of *mellifluo*, for instance, must be articulated, thus, *mel'-lifuo*; and so jealous is the spirit of the language on this point that in words like *accento* the value of the double *c* is preserved by a *t'-ch* sound. It may be asserted that in proportion as the pronunciation of syllables in a language is more or less perfect, in the same proportion will the sense for quantity be vivid and quantitative versification be easy.

Elision can be explained on the same principles. Since no fresh effort, no pause, no new expenditure of time, is needed when two vowels come together, they are suffered to pass as one. How true a law this is may be perceived when we remember that vulgar persons introduce an *r* between two *a*'s, owing to the difficulty of otherwise articulating them separately. The Lucretian elision of the final *s* in words like *mœnibus*, before a consonant, probably shows that this final sibilant was on the point of becoming mute; and the recognized elision of *m* in words like *mecum* before a vowel may in like manner indicate that this liquid had become practically mute, *mecum* tending towards the modern *mecco*.

The main drift of the foregoing analysis has been to show that both quantity and accent have a common element of time. It consequently follows that metres which, like the English, practically ignore quantity, can be scanned in feet, or divided into bars, by accent. Yet the result will never be so accurate as in the case of quantitative rhythms, chiefly because accent itself is variable with us; and the same combinations of syllables, by a slight shifting of accents, may appear to one observer a dactyl, to another an anapaest, and so forth.

An instance may be furnished by the following line, which is a passable hendecasyllabic blank verse:

She in her hands held forth a cup of water.

If we accentuate the first syllable, the rhythm would most naturally be marked thus:

- - - | - - | - - | - - | - -

But this does not yield even a "licentiate iambic." Therefore, in order to bring it within the rule of the metre, we must shift the accent and scan—

˘ — | ˘ — | — — | ˘ — | ˘ — ˘

It is of no use to complain that the line is a bad one and ought to be rewritten, because similar lines are of plentiful occurrence in our best dramatic writers. Without such irregularities blank verse would be monotonous.

Licenses which would have been intolerable to a Greek ear—such as successive trochees in the third and fourth places, of which there are several specimens in Milton, or a trochee in the second place, which is a favorite expedient of Shelley's, are far from disagreeable in the English iambic. Indeed, so variable is its structure that it is by no means easy to define the minimum of metrical form below which a blank verse ceases to be a recognizable line. It is possible that the diminution of the English iambic by one foot less than the Greek renders its licenses more tolerable, and facilitates that interweaving of successive lines by which so many discords are resolved in a controlling harmony. Lastly, it may be observed that, being an accentual metre, blank verse owes much of its rhythmical quality to emphasis. For emphasis is but enforced accent; and when the proper emphasis has been discovered in a line, the problem of its rhythmical structure has almost always been solved. It is thus that close attention to the rhetoric of blank verse becomes absolutely necessary.

It will be seen from the foregoing observations that I am neither for nor against the method of scanning blank verse by the traditional feet of Greek and Latin metres. The terms of ancient prosody represent permanent relations between syllables; nor is there anything merely arbitrary in their definitions. Indeed, they must still be used, for want of a more modern system of notation, when the legitimacy of a line has to be tested; for, after all, the English "licentiate iambic" has a form, although the deflections from that form constitute its beauties. I only contend that it is impossible to apply with rigor rules deduced from the analysis of

quantitative metres to versification based upon accent and emphasis; and also that when such application has been made, and the scansion has been determined, we have still to seek the æsthetic value of the lines in question. It may of course be answered that the same difficulty meets us in classic poetry—that the finest passages of *Æschylus* and *Virgil* do not owe their beauty to their scansion, and that in reading them we habitually ignore it.* That is true; but it is none the less true that they strictly obey the rules of quantitative scansion, whereas it cannot be proved that our blank verse is bound by the like limitations. This constitutes a decisive difference; and the obstinate search for quantitative scansion, even when we have agreed to substitute accents for proper longs and shorts, leads to such misconceptions of the genius of blank verse as rendered *Johnson's* essay on the versification of *Milton* ridiculous.

The remarks expressed in the foregoing paragraphs, together with the two following studies on the history and the mechanism of blank verse, are not published without misgivings. The whole subject of metre is so complex, so entangled with questions of pronunciation, elocution, musical analogy, and proportional values of concatenated syllables, varying in the case of each language, yet probably capable of being scientifically reduced to simple rules under laws as yet but dimly apprehended, that a prudent critic might well hesitate before exposing his crude speculations to the world.† The conviction that as yet no congruity of doctrine has been arrived at—that we are still forced to adapt the nomenclature of a prosody deduced from the analysis of the most highly perfected Greek metres to rhythmical systems based on

* The matter is further complicated by the fact that we are quite ignorant how the Greeks read their verse, and that we are not sure about the pronunciation of Latin.

† As instances of these difficulties, I might point out the choice of hendecasyllabic iambic lines by the Italians, and the loose structure of the French *Alexandrine*, which seems to defy scansion, depending on *cæsura*, pause, and rhyme.

different principles—that we have not sufficiently distinguished between the metrical substratum and the æsthetical or rhetorical effect—induces me to court censure, in the hope that further progress may be made in a region where each observer is apt to tax his fellow-workers with a want of intelligence. The best craftsmen work by instinct, and the subtlest *dilettanti* of their masterpieces are contented with sensation. It still remains for the analyst to discover the laws which have regulated the artistic instinct in the production of exquisitely pleasurable combinations.

II.

THE HISTORY OF BLANK VERSE.

ENGLISH blank verse is perhaps more various and plastic than any other national metre. It is capable of being used for the most commonplace and the most sublime utterances; so that, without any alteration in the vehicle, we pass from merely colloquial dialogue to strains of impassioned soliloquy, from comic repartee to tragic eloquence, from terse epigrams to elaborate descriptions. Originally instituted for the drama, it received in Milton's hands an epical treatment, and has by authors of our own day been used for idyllic and even for lyrical compositions. Yet all of these so widely different applications have only served to develop without exhausting its resources. Plato mentions a Greek musical instrument called *panharmonion*, which was adapted to express the different modes and systems of melodious utterance. This name might be applied to our blank verse; there is no harmony of sound, no dignity of movement, no swiftness, no subtlety of languid sweetness, no brevity, no force of emphasis, beyond its scope. In hearing good blank verse, we do not long for rhyme; our ears are satisfied without it; nor does our sense of order and proportion require the obvious and artificial recurrence of stanzas when the sense creates for itself a melo-

dious structure and is not forced into the mould of any arbitrary form. So much can hardly be said for any other metre. The Greeks, who were peculiarly sensitive to self-imposed canons of fitness in art, reserved the hexameter for epical and idyllic poetry, the iambic for satire and the drama, the elegiac for inscriptions, epigrams, and minor compositions of a more personal character, and other complex structures for lyrical and choral utterances. To have written an epic or an idyl in iambs would to them have seemed inexcusable. And for this reason the iambic was limited both in its use and its development. Two sorts were recognized—the one adapted to the loose and flowing style of comic conversation, the other to the more ceremonious and measured march of tragic dialogue and description. But when the action of the play became animated, instead of accelerating the iambic rhythm, the poet used trochaic or anapaestic measures, obeying the law of variety by adopting a new mode externally fitted to express the change he had in view.

In the infancy of our drama, rhyme, as the natural accompaniment of mediæval poetry, had universally been used, until the courtiers of Elizabeth bethought them of inventing some more solemn and stately metre in imitation of the classic. It will be remembered that attempts to naturalize Greek and Roman rhythms in our language were then fashionable. Sidney and the *literati* of the *Areopagus* spent their leisure hours in fashioning uncouth hexameters, and Roger Ascham, though he recognized the incapacity of English for scansion, was inclined to welcome an unrhymed metre like the classical iambic. Surrey first solved the problem practically by translating parts of the *Æneid* into verses of ten syllables without rhyme. But his measure has not much variety or ease. It remained for two devoted admirers of classical art, Sackville and Norton, to employ what Surrey called his “strange metre” in the drama. Their *Gorboduc*, acted before the queen in 1561–2, is the first tragedy written in blank verse. The insufferable monotony and dreariness of this play are well known to all students of our early literature. Yet respect for

its antiquity induces me to give a specimen of its quaint style. We must remember in reading these lines that they are the embryo of Marlowe's, Shakespeare's, and Milton's verse :

O mother, thou to murder thus thy child!
 Even Jove with justice must with lightning flames
 From heaven send down some strange revenge on thee.
 Ah, noble prince, how oft have I beheld
 Thee mounted on thy fierce and trampling steed,
 Shining in armor bright before the tilt,
 And with thy mistress' sleeve tied on thy helm,
 And charge thy staff—to please thy lady's eye—
 That bowed the headpiece of thy friendly foe!

I have purposely chosen the most animated apostrophe in the whole play, in order that its venerable authors might appear to the best advantage. It will be noticed that, notwithstanding much stiffness in the movement of the metre, and some embarrassment in the grammatical construction, we yet may trace variety and emphasis in the pauses of these lines beyond what would at that epoch have been possible in sequences of rhymed couplets. Mr. Collier, in his *History of Dramatic Poetry*, mentions two other plays written in blank verse, but not performed on the public stage, before the appearance of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*. It is to this tragedy that he assigns the credit of having once and for all established blank verse as the popular dramatic metre of the English. With this opinion all students who have examined the origin of our theatrical literature will, no doubt, agree. But Marlowe did not merely drive the rhymed couplet from the stage by substituting the blank verse of his contemporaries: he created a new metre by the melody, variety, and force which he infused into the iambic, and left models of versification the pomp of which Shakespeare and Milton alone can be said to have surpassed. The change which he operated was so thorough and so novel to the playwrights as well as the playgoers of his time, that he met with some determined opposition. Thomas Nash spoke scornfully of "idiot art masters, that intrude themselves to our

ears as the alchemists of eloquence, who (mounted on the stage of eloquence) think to attract better pens with the swelling bombast of bragging blank verse." In another sneer he described the new measure as "the spacious volubility of a drumming decasyllabon;" while Robert Greene, who had written many wearisome rhymed dramas, talked of making "verses jet on the stage in tragical buskins, every word filling the ear like the fa-burden of Bow bell, daring God out of heaven with that atheist, Tamburlan, or blaspheming with the mad priest of the Sun." But our "licentiate iambic" was destined to triumph. Greene and Nash gave way before inevitable fate, and wrote some better plays in consequence.

Let us inquire what change Marlowe really introduced, and what was his theory of dramatic versification. He found the ten-syllabled heroic line monotonous, monosyllabic, and divided into five feet of tolerably regular alternate short and long. He left it various in form and structure, sometimes redundant by a syllable, sometimes deficient, enriched with unexpected emphases and changes in the beat. He found no sequence or attempt at periods; one line succeeded another with insipid regularity, and all were made after the same model. He grouped his verse according to the sense, obeying an internal law of melody, and allowing the thought contained in his words to dominate their form. He did not force his metre to preserve a fixed and unalterable type, but suffered it to assume most variable modulations, the whole beauty of which depended upon their perfect adaptation to the current of his ideas. By these means he was able to produce the double effect of variety and unity, to preserve the fixed march of his chosen metre, and yet, by subtle alterations in the pauses, speed, and grouping of the syllables, to make one measure represent a thousand. Used in this fashion, blank verse became a Proteus. It resembled music, which requires regular time and rhythm; but, by the employment of phrase, induces a higher kind of melody to rise above the common and despotic beat of time. Bad writers of blank verse, like Marlowe's predecessors, or

like those who in all ages have been deficient in plastic energy and power of harmonious modulation, produce successions of monotonous iambic lines, sacrificing the poetry of expression to the mechanism of their art. Metre with them ceases to be the organic body of a vital thought, and becomes a mere framework. And bad critics praise them for the very faults of tameness and monotony which they miscall regularity of numbers. It was thus that the sublimest as well as the most audacious of Milton's essays in versification fell under the censure of Johnson.

It is not difficult to support these eulogies by reference to Marlowe's works; for some of his finest blank-verse passages allow themselves to be detached without any great injury to their integrity. The following may be cited as an instance of his full-voiced harmony. Faustus exclaims—

Have I not made blind Homer sing to me
Of Alexander's love and Œnon's death?
And hath not he who built the walls of Troy
With ravishing sound of his melodious harp
Made music with my Mephistopheles?

We feel at once that a new spirit has been breathed into the metre—a spirit of undefinable melody. Something is owing to the choice of long-resounding and full-vowelled words; something to the use of monosyllables, as in the third line; something to alliteration; but more than all to the passion of the author, and to the “plastic stress” of his creative genius. This tragedy is full of fine passages, and the soliloquy in which Faustus watches his last moments ebb away might be quoted as a perfect instance of variety and sustained effect in a situation which could only be redeemed from monotony by consummate art. *Edward the Second* is not less rich in versification. In order to prove that Marlowe could temper his blank verse to different moods and passions, take this speech, in which the indignant Edward first gives way to anger, and then to misery—

Mortimer! who talks of Mortimer,
Who wounds me with the name of Mortimer,

That bloody man? Good father, on thy lap
 Lay I this head laden with mickle care.
 O, might I never ope these eyes again,
 Never again lift up this drooping head,
 O, never more lift up this dying heart!

The didactic dignity of Marlowe's verse may be gathered from these lines in *Tamburlaine*:

Our souls whose faculties can comprehend
 The wondrous architecture of the world,
 And measure every wandering planet's course,
 Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
 And always moving as the restless spheres,
 Will us to wear ourselves, and never rest
 Until we reach the ripest fruit of all,
 That perfect bliss and sole felicity,
 The sweet fruition of an earthly crown.

Again, as if wishing to prove what liberties might be taken with the iambic metre without injury to its music, Marlowe wrote these descriptive lines in the *Jew of Malta*:

Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,
 Jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds,
 Beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds,
 And sold seen costly stones of so great price,
 As one of them, indifferently rated,
 May serve, in peril of calamity,
 To ransom great kings from captivity.

The license of the first and third line is both daring and successful. The second departs less from the ordinary rhythm, while the four last carry back the period into the usual flow of Marlowe's verse.

The four passages which I have quoted are, perhaps, sufficient to prove that blank verse was not only brought into existence, but also perfected, by Marlowe. It is true that, like all great poets, he left his own peculiar imprint on it, and that his metre is marked by an almost extravagant exuberance, impetuosity, and height of coloring. It seems to flow from him with the rapidity of improv-

isation, and to follow a law of melody rather felt than studied by its author. We feel that the poet loved to give the rein to his ungovernable fancy, forgetting the thought with which he started, revelling in sonorous words, and pouring forth a stream of images, so that the mind receives at last a vague and various impression of sublimity.

Marlowe's contemporaries soon caught the trick of sonorous versification. The obscure author of a play which has sometimes been attributed to Marlowe wrote these lines in the true style of his master :

Chime out your softest strains of harmony,
And on delicious music's silken wings
Send ravishing delight to my love's ears.

Peele contented himself with repeating his more honeyed cadences.

Shakespeare, next to Marlowe, had more influence than any poet on the formation of our blank verse. Coleridge has maintained that his diction and metre were peculiarly his own, unimitated and inimitable. But I believe that a careful comparison of his style with that of his contemporaries will make it evident that he began a period in which versification was refined and purified from Marlowe's wordiness. Shakespeare has more than Marlowe's versatility and power; but his metre is never so extravagant in its pomp of verbal grandeur. He restrains his own luxuriance, and does not allow himself to be seduced by pleasing sounds. His finest passages owe none of their beauty to alliteration, and yet he knew most exquisitely how to use that meretricious handmaid of melody. Nothing can be more seductive than the charm of repeated liquids and vowels in the following lines :

On such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea banks and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.

Nor again did Shakespeare employ big-sounding words so pro-

fusely as Marlowe, but reserved them for effects of especial solemnity, as in the speech of Timon :

Come not to me again : but say to Athens,
Timon hath made his everlasting mansion
Upon the beachèd verge of the salt flood ;
Whom once a day with his embossèd froth
The turbulent surge shall cover : thither come,
And let my gravestone be your oracle.

But Shakespeare did not always, or indeed often, employ these somewhat obvious artifices of harmonious diction. The characteristic of his verse is that it is naturally, unobtrusively, and enduringly musical. We hardly know why his words are melodious, or what makes them always fresh, whereas the more apparent charms of Fletcher and of Marlowe pall upon our ears. Throughout his writings there is a subtle adjustment of sound to sense, of lofty thoughts to appropriate words ; the ideas evolve themselves with inexhaustible spontaneity, and a suitable investiture of language is never wanting, so that each cadenced period seems made to hold a thought of its own, and thought is linked to thought and cadence to cadence in unending continuity. Inferior artists have systems of melody, pauses which they repeat, favorite terminations, and accelerations or retardations of the rhythm, which they employ whenever the occasion prompts them. But there is none of this in Shakespeare. He never falls into the commonplace of mannerism. Compare Oberon's speeches with Prospero's, or with Lorenzo's, or with Romeo's, or with Mark Antony's ; under the Shakespearian similarity there is a different note in all of these, whereas we know beforehand what form the utterances of Bellario, or Philaster, or Memnon, or Ordella in Fletcher must certainly assume. As a single instance of the elasticity, self-restraint, and freshness of the Shakespearian blank verse ; of its freedom from Marlowe's turgidity, or Fletcher's languor, or Milton's involution ; of its ringing sound and lucid vigor, the following celebrated passage from *Measure for Measure* may be quoted. It illustrates the freedom from adventitious ornament and the

organic continuity of Shakespeare's versification, while it also exhibits his power of varying his cadences and suiting them to the dramatic utterance of his characters :

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where ;
 To lie in cold obstruction and to rot ;
 This sensible warm motion to become
 A kneaded clod ; and the delighted spirit
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
 In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice ;
 To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
 And blown with restless violence about
 The pendent world ; or to be worse than worst
 Of those that lawless and incertain thoughts
 Imagine howling ;—'tis too horrible !
 The weariest and most loathed worldly life,
 That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
 Can lay on Nature, is a paradise
 To what we fear of death.

Each of Shakespeare's contemporaries and successors among the dramatists commanded a style of his own in blank-verse composition. It was so peculiarly the function of the stage and of the playwrights at that particular epoch to perfect this metre, that I do not think some detailed examination of the language of the drama will be out of place. Coleridge observes that "Ben Jonson's blank verse is very masterly and individual." To this criticism might be added that it is the blank verse of a scholar—pointed, polished, and free from the lyricisms of his age. It lacks harmony and is often labored ; but vigorous and solid it never fails to be. This panegyric of poetry from the Italianized version of *Every Man in his Humor* may be taken as a specimen of his most animated style :

I can repel opinion and approve
 The state of poesy, such as it is,
 Blessed, eternal, and most true divine ;
 Indeed, if you will look on poesy,
 As she appears in many, poor and lame,
 Patched up in remnants and old worn-out rags,

Half starved for want of her peculiar food,
 Sacred invention ; then I must confess
 Both your conceit and censure of her merit :
 But view her in her glorious ornaments,
 Attired in the majesty of art,
 Set high in spirit with the precious taste
 Of sweet philosophy ; and which is most,
 Crowned with the rich traditions of a soul
 That hates to have her dignity profaned
 With any relish of an earthly thought—
 Oh ! then how proud a presence does she bear !
 Then she is like herself, fit to be seen
 Of none but grave and consecrated eyes.

After a complete perusal of his works, I find very little of the fluent grace which belonged in so large a measure to Fletcher and to Shakespeare. Yet the first lines of the *Sad Shepherd* have a very delicate music ; they are almost unique in Ben Jonson :

Here was she wont to go ! and here ! and here !
 Just where these daisies, pinks, and violets grow :
 The world may find the spring by following her ;
 For other print her airy steps ne'er left.
 Her treading would not bend a blade of grass,
 Or shake the downy bluebell from his stalk !
 But like the soft west wind she shot along,
 And where she went, the flowers took thickest root,
 As she had sowed them with her odorous foot.

The melody which gives so chaste and elegant a beauty to these lines is invariable in the verse of Beaumont and Fletcher. We have too much of it there, and surfeit on sweets ; for in a very short time we discover the trick of these great versifiers, and learn to expect their luxurious alliterations, and repeated cæsuras at the end of the fifth syllable. Their redundant and deficient lines, the sweetness long drawn out of their delicious cadences, become well known. Then the movement of their verse is not, like that of Shakespeare, self-evolved and thoroughly organic : it obeys a rule ; luxury is sought for its own sake, and languor follows as a direct consequence of certain verbal mannerisms. Among these

may be mentioned a decided preference for all words in which there is a predominance of liquids and of vowels. For instance, in this line,

Showers, hails, snows, frosts, and two-edged winds that prime
The maiden blossoms,

there is no unlicensed redundancy of syllables; but the labor of getting through so many accumulated sounds produces a strange retardation of the movement. Another peculiarity is the substitution of hendecasyllabic lines for the usual decasyllable blank verse through long periods of dialogue. In one scene of *Valentinian* there are fifty-five continuous lines, of which only five are decasyllabic verses, the rest being hendecasyllables; so that the license of the superfluous syllable, which is always granted in dramatic writing for the sake of variety, becomes, in its turn, far more cloying than a strict adherence to the five-footed verse. It is also noticeable that this weak ending is frequently constructed by the addition of some emphatic monosyllable. Thus:

I do remember him; he was my guardian,
Appointed by the senate to preserve me:
What a full majesty sits in his face yet.

Or:

The desolations that this great eclipse works.

The natural consequence of these delays and languors in the rhythm is that the versification of Beaumont and Fletcher has always a meandering and rotary movement. It does not seem to leap or glide straight onward, but to return upon itself and wind and double. The following passage may be quoted as illustrative of its almost lyrical voluptuousness:

I do her wrong, much wrong: she's young and blessed,
Fair as the spring, and as his blossoms tender;
But I a nipping north-wind, my head hung
With hails and frosty icicles: are the souls so too
When they depart hence, lame and old and loveless?
Ah, no! 'tis ever youth there: age and death
Follow our flesh no more, and that forced opinion
That spirits have no sexes, I believe not.

The speech of Aspatia among her maidens is an excellent example of the more careful verse of Fletcher:

Fie, you have missed it here, Antiphila,
 You are much mistaken, wench;
 These colors are not dull and pale enough,
 To show a soul so full of misery
 As this sad lady's was; do it by me,
 Do it again by me the lost Aspatia,
 And you shall find all true but the wild island.
 I stand upon the sea-beach now, and think
 Mine arms thus, and mine hair blown with the wind,
 Wild as that desert, and let all about me
 Tell that I am forsaken; do my face
 (If thou hadst ever feeling of a sorrow)
 Thus, thus, Antiphila, strive to make me look
 Like Sorrow's monument; and the trees about me,
 Let them be dry and leafless; let the rocks
 Groan with continual surges, and behind me
 Make all a desolation; look, look, wenches,
 A miserable life of this poor picture!

There is enough variety and subtle melody in this without the usual effeminacy of Fletcher's style. What makes it most effective is that it is written so as to represent the natural inflections of tone, the pauses, and the emphases of the character who speaks it. One more specimen of this most musical of poets may be allowed me. It is from *Thierry and Theodoret*. Thierry speaks and Ordella answers:

Th. 'Tis full of fearful shadows.

Ord. So is sleep, sir,

Or anything that's merely ours and mortal;
 We were begotten gods else: but these fears,
 Feeling but once the fires of noble thoughts,
 Fly, like the shapes of clouds we form, to nothing.

Th. Suppose it death.

Ord. I do.

Th. And endless parting

With all we can call ours, with all our sweetness,
 With youth, strength, pleasure, people, time, nay reason.

For in the silent grave no conversation,
 No joyful tread of friends, no voice of lovers,
 No careful father's counsel; nothing's heard,
 Nor nothing is, but all oblivion,
 Dust, and an endless darkness; and dare you, woman,
 Desire this place?

Ord. 'Tis of all sleeps the sweetest;
 Children begin it to us, strong men seek it,
 And kings from height of all their painted glories
 Fall like spent exhalations to this centre.

There the poet should have stopped, for exquisite thoughts have hitherto been rendered in exquisite language. He continues, however, for five lines of inferior beauty.

Turning from the more celebrated to the less distinguished playwrights, we find almost universally the power of writing forcible blank verse. Marston condensed much thought into his lines, and made such epigrams as these:

Can man by no means creep out of himself
 And leave the slough of viperous grief behind?

or such addresses of concentrated passion as this prologue:

Therefore we proclaim
 If any spirit breathes within this round,
 Uneapable of weighty passion
 (As from his birth being hugged in the arms
 And nuzzled 'twixt the breasts of happiness),
 Who winks and shuts his apprehension up
 From common sense of what men were, and are;
 Who would not know what men must be: let such
 Hurry amain from our black-visaged shows;
 We shall affright their eyes. But if a breast,
 Nailed to the earth with grief, if any heart,
 Pierced through with anguish, pant within this ring;
 If there be any blood whose heat is choked
 And stifled with true sense of misery—
 If aught of these strains fill this consort up—
 They do arrive most welcome.

We find both quaintness of language and roughness of rhythm in

these lines ; but how weighty, how eloquently solemn, is the apostrophe to those of the spectators whose own sorrows render them participant of tragic woes. It is clear that a large and broad *style*, a sense of rhythm, and a freedom in the use of blank verse as a natural vehicle of thought, were epidemic in that age.

Facility for expressing every shade of sentiment or reflection in clear and simple lines belonged peculiarly to Decker, Heywood, Middleton, and Rowley, poets who made but little pretension to melodious charms and flowers of fancy, but whose native ear maintained such flowing periods as the following :

- D. Thy voice sends forth such music, that I never
 Was ravished with a more celestial sound,
 Were every servant in the world like thee,
 So full of goodness, angels would come down
 To dwell with us. Thy name is Angelo,
 And like that name thou art. Get thee to rest ;
 Thy youth with too much watching is oppressed.
- A. No, my dear lady. I could weary stars,
 And force the wakeful moon to lose her eyes,
 By my late watching ; but to wait on you,
 When at your prayers you kneel before the altar,
 Methinks I'm singing with some choir in heaven,
 So blest I hold me in your company.
 Therefore, my most loved mistress, do not bid
 Your boy, so serviceable, to get hence ;
 For then you break his heart.

The same praise belongs to Massinger, who was, indeed, associated with Decker in the production of the play from which these lines are quoted. Coleridge remarks that he has reconciled the language of everyday life with poetical diction more thoroughly than any other writer of dramatic blank verse, and for this reason he recommends him as a better model for young writers than Shakespeare, who is far too individual, and Fletcher, who is too monotonously lyrical.

If it is the ease with all our dramatists that the melody of their versification depends entirely upon the sense of their words, this

is particularly true of Massinger. It will be noticed that all the changes in his rhythm are accounted for by changes in the thought, or answer to supposed alterations of the actor's gestures and of his voice. In lighter moods, Massinger could use hendecasyllabic periods with much of Fletcher's melody. This is a specimen :

Not far from where my father lives, a lady,
 A neighbor by, blest with as great a beauty
 As nature durst bestow without undoing,
 Dwelt, and most happily, as I thought then,
 And blessed the house a thousand times she dwelt in.
 This beauty, in the blossom of my youth,
 When my first fire knew no adulterate incense,
 Nor I no way to flatter but my fondness,
 In all the bravery my friends could show me,
 In all the faith my innocence could give me,
 In the best language my true tongue could tell me,
 And all the broken sighs my sick heart lent me,
 I sued and served. Long did I love this lady,
 Long was my travail, long my trade, to win her;
 With all the duty of my soul I served her.

There is no need to call attention to the alliterative structures of this period. They are strongly marked. Massinger represents a whole class of the later Elizabethan playwrights, who used a flowing blank verse, perfected by long practice for the purpose of the stage. Shirley was one of this set; he wrote evenly and with due attention to the meaning of his words. But there were other ambitious versifiers, like Ford, who sought for more recondite and elaborate graces. It has been thought that Ford imitated Shakespeare in his style as much as in the situations of his dramas. I cannot myself perceive much trace of Shakespeare in the verse of Ford; but these two specimens will enable the reader to judge fairly of his rhetoric :

Hie to thy father's house, there lock thee fast
 Alone within thy chamber; then fall down
 On both thy knees, and grovel on the ground;
 Cry to thy heart, wash every word thou utterest

In tears, and (if't be possible) of blood :
Beg Heaven to cleanse the leprosy of lust
That rots thy soul ; acknowledge what thou art,
A wretch, a worm, a nothing : weep, sigh, pray
Three times a day, and three times every night ;
For seven days' space do this ; then, if thou findest
No change in thy desires, return to me,
I'll think on remedy. Pray for thyself
At home, whilst I pray for thee here ; away—
My blessing with thee—we have need to pray.

The lines are much more broken up than is usual with our dramatists. They sparkle with short sentences and quick successions of reiterated sounds. The same effect is noticeable in Calantha's dying speech, where the situation is quite different :

Forgive me. Now I turn to thee, thou shadow
Of my contracted lord : bear witness all,
I put my mother's wedding-ring upon
His finger ; 'twas my father's last bequest :
Thus I now marry him whose wife I am !
Death shall not separate us. O, my lords,
I but deceived your eyes with antic gesture,
When one news straight came huddling on another,
Of death, and death, and death ; still I danced forward.
But it struck home, and here, and in an instant.
Be such mere women, who with shrieks and outeries,
Can vow a present end to all their sorrows ;
Yet live to vow new pleasures, and outlive them.
They are the silent griefs which cut the heart-strings ;
Let me die smiling.

This is a sculptured and incisive style. Even the *largo* (to borrow a term from music) of Calantha's address to her nobles, though it assumes hendecasyllabic stateliness, maintains the crisp and pointed motion of the lines that had preceded it. While speaking of Ben Jonson or of Marston would have been the proper time to mention the blank verse of George Chapman, a very manly and scholarlike author. He expressed philosophical ideas in

elevated language. This eulogy of honorable love is vigorous in thought as well as metre :

'Tis nature's second sun,
 Causing a spring of virtues where he shines ;
 And as without the sun, the world's great eye,
 All colors, beauties, both of art and nature,
 Are given in vain to man ; so without love
 All beauties bred in women are in vain,
 All virtues born in men lie buried ;
 For love informs them as the sun doth colors ;
 And as the sun, reflecting his warm beams
 Against the earth, begets all fruits and flowers,
 So love, fair shining in the inward man,
 Brings forth in him the honorable fruits
 Of valor, wit, virtue, and haughty thoughts,
 Brave resolution, and divine discourse.

There is nothing in this passage which can be termed highly poetical. It is chiefly interesting as showing the plasticity of language and of metre in the hands of our Elizabethan authors. They fixed their mind upon their thoughts, as we should do in writing prose, and turned out terse and pregnant lines not unadorned with melody.

I have hitherto purposely abstained from speaking about Webster, a poet of no ordinary power, whose treatment of blank verse is specially illustrative of all the licenses which were permitted by the playwrights of that time. His language is remarkably condensed, elliptical, and even crabbed. His verse is broken up into strange blocks and masses, often reading like rhythmical prose. It is hard, for instance, to make a five-footed line out of the following :

To be executed again ; who must despatch me ?

Yet close analysis will always prove that there was method in the aberrations of Webster, and that he used his metre as the most delicate and responsive instrument for all varieties of dramatic expression. Avoiding the sing-song of Greene and Peele, the lyrical sweetness of Fletcher, the prosaic gravity of Jonson, the lim-

pid fluency of Heywood and Decker, the tumid magniloquence of Marlowe, and the glittering regularity of Ford, he perfected a style which depends for its effect upon the emphases and pauses of the reciter. One of the most striking lines in his tragedy of the *Duchess of Malfi* proves how boldly and how successfully Webster sacrificed metre to expression. A brother is looking for the first time after death on the form of a sister whom he has caused to be murdered :

Cover her face: mine eyes dazzle: she died young.

There is no cæsura, no regular flow of verse, in this line, though in point of syllables it is not more redundant than half of Fletcher's. Each sentence has to be said separately, with long intervals and sighs, that indicate the working of remorseful thought. The powerful collocation of his words may be illustrated by such a line as—

Other sins only speak; murder shrieks out!

where the logical meaning can hardly fail to be emphasized by the reader. Scansion in the verse of Webster is subordinate to the purpose of the speaker: in writing it he no doubt imagined his actors declaiming with great variety of intonation, with frequent and lengthy pauses, and with considerable differences in the rapidity of their utterances. The dialogue of the duchess with her waiting-maid on the subject of the other world and death is among the finest for its thoughts and language. As far as rhythm contributes to its excellences, they depend entirely upon the pauses, emphases, and irregularities of all sorts which are used. The duchess begins :

O, that it were possible we might
But hold some two days' conference with the dead.
From them I should learn somewhat, I am sure,
I never shall know here.

Up to this point the verses have run smoothly for Webster. But the duchess has exhausted one vein of meditation. Her voice sinks, and she falls into a profound revery. When she rouses

herself again to address Cariola, she starts with a new thought, and the line is made redundant :

I'll tell thee a miracle ;
I am not mad yet to my cause of sorrow :
The heaven o'er my head seems made of molten brass,
The earth of flaming sulphur ; yet I am not mad.

To eke out the second line the voice is made to dwell with emphasis upon the word "mad," while the third and fourth have each twelve syllables, which must be pronounced with desperate energy and distinctness—as it were rapidly beneath the breath. But again her passion changes. It relents, and becomes more tender. And for a space we have verses that flow more evenly :

I am acquainted with sad misery ;
As the tanned galley-slave is with his oar ;
Necessity makes me suffer constantly,
And custom makes it easy.

At this point she sinks into meditation, and on rousing herself again with a fresh thought, the verse is broken and redundant :

What do I look like now ?

Cariola answers plainly, and her lines have a smooth rhythm :

Like to your picture in the gallery,
A deal of life in show, but none in practice ;
Or rather like some reverend monument,
Whose ruins are even pitied.

The duchess takes up this thought :

Very proper ;
And fortune seems only to have her eyesight
To behold my tragedy.

Here her contemplation is broken by the approach of a messenger, and she exclaims, without completing the line :

How now !

What noise is that ?

It might seem almost hypercritical to remark, that when the train

of thought is broken from without, the verse is deficient; when broken by the natural course of the speaker's reflection, it is redundant. Yet this may be observed in the instances which I have quoted, and there is a real reason for it. The redundant line indicates the incubation of long-continued revery; the deficient very well expresses that short and sudden cessation of thought which is produced by an interruption from without. The remarks which I have made on Webster's style apply with almost equal force to that of his contemporaries. We read in *Hamlet*, for instance:

This bodily creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.
Ecstasy!

The second line is defective in one syllable. That syllable, to Shakespeare's delicate sense of the value of sounds and pauses, was supplied by Hamlet's manner. The prince was meant, no doubt, to startle his audience by the sudden repetition of the word "ecstasy," after a quick gesture of astonishment.

To those who read the pages of our dramatists with this conception of their metre, its irregularities furnish an unerring index to the inflections which the actors must have used, to the characters which the poets designed, and to the situations which they calculated. The want of action is thus in some measure compensated, and it becomes apparent that the true secret of blank verse consists in the proper adaptation of words and rhythms to the sense contained in them. On this point I have already more than once insisted. I repeat it because it seems to me that blank verse cannot be properly appreciated, far less properly written, unless it be remembered that thought must always run before expression, and mould language to its own particular uses. Blank verse is, indeed, a sort of divinized prose. Unlimited by rhyme or stanza, it has the freedom of *oratio soluta* subject to severe laws of rhythm. In the cunning use of this liberty, in the continual creation of melodious form adapted to the ever-varying subtleties of thought and feeling, lies the secret of the versifier's art.

Having traced the origin and development of blank verse upon the stage, and seen the congruence of liberty and law, the harmony of thought and form, which constitute its beauty, we can understand how Milton came to use it as he did. Milton was deeply read in the Elizabethan authors; he profited by all of them and wore their mantle with a double portion of their power. Nor did he fail to feel the necessity of raising this metre, without altering its essential nature, to the epical dignity of the Virgilian hexameter; so that he added structures of more complex melody than had been used upon the stage, periods more fitted to reading or to recitation than to the rapid utterance of acted character. Yet, while he dignified the metre by epical additions, he never forgot that he was handling the verse of tragedy; and every one of the "remarkably unharmonious" lines which Johnson has collected in his essay on the versification of Milton was not fashioned, as the critic hints, in slovenly haste, or in despair of making modern language musical, but was deliberately written in obedience to the highest laws of the metre which Marlowe, Shakespeare, Fletcher, Webster, and the other dramatists had used. In suiting blank verse to epic poetry, Milton preserved the elasticity and force with which his predecessors had wielded it; his so-called harshness resulted from a deliberate or instinctive obedience to the genius of the English tragic metre. It seems hardly necessary to insist upon this view of Milton's versification. Yet the pernicious canons of the eighteenth century, when taste had become habituated to the mechanical regularity and meaningless monotony of the couplet, still prevail, and there are people who cannot read Milton by the sense and by their ear, but who cling blindly to the laws of rigorous scansion. A dispute arose some time ago in one of our leading papers as to the proper reading of two lines in *Samson Agonistes*; where, by the way, dramatic license was, to say the least, allowable. The lines run thus:

Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old: what hinders now?

It was suggested that they might be reduced to order by this transposition:

Yet God of old hath for his people wrought
Things as incredible: what hinders now?

It is clear that the versification according to the second reading is far smoother. But is it more Miltonic, and would it not be very easy by a similar process of transposition to emasculate some of the most vigorous periods in Milton's poetry, and to reduce his music to the five-footed monotony of incompetent versifiers? The truth is, that the chorus—or Milton, who speaks in the chorus—does not think about iambic regularity, but is intent on arguing with Manoah. Its words of faith and confidence rush forth:

Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old—

then stop; and the question follows after a pause:

What hinders now?

Energy of meaning is thus communicated to the double purpose of their argument. The action of the speech is weakened by the suggested emendation. Take again line 175 of *Samson Agonistes*:

Universally crowned with highest praises,

and write it—

Crowned universally with highest praises.

The first form is anomalous; the second makes a very decent hendecasyllabic. Johnson, Bentley, and the like would rejoice in so manipulating a hundred characteristic passages; but true criticism looks backward and deduces its grounds of judgment from the predecessors rather than the successors of a poet. Adopting this standard, we should try Milton by Elizabethan models and not by the versifiers of the eighteenth century.

But these examples are taken from a tragedy. In *Paradise Lost* we find that Milton has varied the dramatic rhythm by a

very sparing use of hendecasyllable lines and by introducing far more involved and artificial cadences. In fact, the flow of epical language is naturally more sedate and complex than that of the drama; for it has to follow the thoughts of one mind through all its reasonings. Yet the dramatic genius of the metre is forever asserting itself, as in the following lines:

Rejoicing but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submit ; he reared me, and, " Whom thou soughtest I am,"
Said mildly, " Author of all this thou seest
Above or round about thee or beneath."

Here, if we fix our attention upon the lines and try to scan them, we find the third most dissonant. But if we read them by the sense, and follow the grouping of the thoughts, we terminate one cadence at "submit," and after a moment of parenthetical description begin another period, which extends itself through the concluding lines. To analyze Miltonic blank verse in all its details would be the work of much study and prolonged labor. It is enough to indicate the fact that the most sonorous passages begin and end with interrupted lines, including, in one organic structure, periods, parentheses, and paragraphs of fluent melody; that the harmonies are wrought by subtle and most complex alliterative systems, by delicate changes in the length and volume of syllables, and by the choice of names magnificent for their mere gorgeousness of sound. In these structures there are many pauses which enable the ear and voice to rest themselves, but none are perfect, none satisfy the want created by the opening hemistich, until the final and deliberate close is reached. Then the sense of harmony is gratified, and we proceed with pleasure to a new and different sequence. If the truth of this remark is not confirmed by the following celebrated and essentially Miltonic passage, it must fall without further justification:

And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hardening in his strength,
Glories ; for never since created man

Met such embodied force as named with these
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warred on by cranes : though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra, with the heroic race were joined
That fought at Thebes or Ilium, on each side
Mixed with auxiliar gods ; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with English and Armoric knights ;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco or Morocco or Trebizond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia.

After perusing this quotation, let the reader compare it with Claudio's speech on Death in *Measure for Measure*, and observe the difference between Shakespearian and Miltonic, between dramatic and epical blank verse. The one is simple in construction and progressive, the other is complex and stationary ; but both are musical beyond the possibility of imitation. The one exhibits a thought in the process of formation, developing itself from the excited fancy of the speaker. The other presents to us an image crystallized and perfect in the poet's mind ; the one is in time, the other in space—the one is a growing and the other a complete organism. The whole difference between the drama and the epic is implicit in these periods. The one, if we may play upon a fancy, resembles music and the other architecture.

In this, again, we find a proof that the structure of blank verse depends upon the nature of the thought which it is meant to clothe. The thoughts of a dramatist—whether his characters converse or soliloquize—are, of necessity, in evolution ; the thoughts of an epical poet are before him, as matter which he must give form to. The richness and melody and variety of his versification will, in either case, depend upon the copiousness of his language, the delicacy of his ear, and the fertility of his invention. We owe everything to the nature of the poet and very little to the decasyllables which he is using.

Milton was the last of the Elizabethans. With him the spirit of our literary renaissance became for the time extinct. Even during his lifetime the taste and capacity for blank-verse composition had expired. It is said that Dryden wished to put *Paradise Lost* into couplets, and received from Milton the indifferent answer, "Let the young man tag his rhymes." Dryden, in his essay on dramatic poetry, defended the use of rhyme, and introduced the habit of writing plays in heroics, to the detriment of sense and character and freedom. Yet there are passages in his later tragedies—*All for Love*, *Cleopatra*, *King Arthur*, and *The Spanish Friar*—which show that he could use the tragic metre of blank verse with moderate ability. The Elizabethan inspiration still feebly survives in lines like these :

The gods are just,
But how can finite measure infinite ?
Reason, alas ! it does not know itself !
Yet man, vain man, will, with this short-lined plummet,
Fathom the vast abyss of heavenly justice,
Whatever is, is in its causes just,
Since all things are by fate. But purblind man
Sees but a part of the chain, the nearest links ;
His eyes not carrying to that equal beam
That poises all above.

This is average thought expressed in average words. But *Abraham and Achitophel* is a work of the very highest genius in its kind, written not under the influence and inspiration of another age, but produced as the expression of a different and no less genuine phase of national development. During the period of Dryden's ascendancy over English literature, very little blank verse was written of much moment. Yet, it must be remembered that the passage of the *Mourning Bride*, which Johnson preferred to any single piece of English descriptive poetry, first saw the light in 1697. The lines begin, "How reverend is the face of this tall pile." They are dignified, melodious, and clear ; but we already trace in the handling of the language more of the effort after neatness and precision, and less of nature, than was common

with the elder dramatists. After the death of Otway and Congreve, blank verse held the stage in the miserable compositions of the eighteenth century; but it had no true vitality. The real works of genius in that period were written in couplets, and it was not until the first dawn of a second renaissance in England that blank verse began again to be practised. Meanwhile the use of the couplet had unfitted poets for its composition. Their acquired canons of regularity, when applied to that loose and flowing metre, led them astray. They no longer trusted exclusively to their ear, but to a mechanism which rendered accuracy of ear almost useless, not to say impossible. Hence it followed that, when blank verse began again to be written, it found itself very much at the point where it had stood before the appearance of Marlowe. Even Thomson, who succeeded so well in imitating Spenserian stanza, wrote stiff and languid blank verse with monosyllabic terminations and monotonous cadences—a pedestrian style.

Cowper, in his translation of Homer, aimed at the Miltonic structure, and acquired a solemn, though cumbrous, versification. The description of the Russian empress's ice-palace, in *The Winter Morning Walk*, proves how he had imbued himself with the language of the *Paradise Lost*, and how naturally he adapted it to his own thoughts. Coleridge's blank verse has a kind of inflated grandeur, but not much of Elizabethan variety of music, subtlety of texture, and lightness of movement. His lines written in the Valley of Chamouni are sonorous; but they want elasticity, and are inferior in quality to his lyrics. Heaviness of style and turgid rhetoric deface his verse and prose alike. Wordsworth, again, could not handle blank verse with any certainty of success. Wildernesses of the *Excursion* extend for pages and pages barren of beauty. We plod over them on foot, sinking knee-deep into the clinging sand; whereas the true master of blank verse carries us aloft as on a winged steed through cloud and sunshine in a yielding air. Wordsworth mistook the language of prose for that of Nature, and did not understand that natural verse might be

written without the tedious heaviness of common disquisitions. One of his highest efforts is the poem on the Simplon Pass, introduced into the *Prelude*. This owes its great beauty to the perfect delineation which he has succeeded in producing by suggestive images, by reiterated cadences, by solitary lines, by breathless repetitions, by the perfect union, in short, which subsists between the poet's mind and the nature he is representing.

Byron, again, is uncertain in his blank verse. The lines on the Coliseum in *Manfred* are as good as a genuine Elizabethan passage, because they are spoken from the fulness of a poet's heart, and with a continuity of thought and copiousness of language which insured their organic vitality. But they are exceptional. Byron needed rhyme as an assistance to his defective melody. He did not feel that inner music which is the soul of true blank verse and sounding prose. In Keats, at last, we reach this power. His *Hyperion* is sung, not written, governed in all its parts by the controlling force of imagined melody. Its music is fluid, bound by no external measurement of feet, but determined by the sense and intonation of the poet's thought, while, like the crotalos of the Athenian flute-player, the decasyllabic beat maintains an uninterrupted undercurrent of regular pulsations. Keats studied Milton and strove to imitate him. But he falls below the majesty and breadth of Milton's manner. He is too luxuriant in words and images, too loose in rhythm and prone to description. In fact, he produces an Elizabethan poem of even more wanton superfluity than those which he imitates. The entrance of Phæbus into his desecrated palace is a brilliant instance of the plasticity of language in a master's hand. But there is something florid in it which smacks of a degenerating taste in art. Some of Shelley's blank verse is, perhaps, the best which this century has produced, though it is too hasty and incoherent, especially in *Prometheus Unbound*, to attain the equality of sustained style. In *Alastor* he shows what he can do both without imitation and by its help. The lines on Egypt are written with a true Miltonic roll and ponderous grandiloquence of aggregated names. But in the last par-

agraph of the poem we find the vernal freshness, elasticity, and delicacy that are Shelley's own. It is noticeable that both Keats and Shelley make an Elizabethan use of the so-called heroic couplet. *Epipsychidion* and *Lamia* are written, not in the metre of Dryden, Churchill, Pope, and Crabbe, but in that of Marlowe and Fletcher. Nothing proves more significantly the distance between the Elizabethan spirit and the taste of the eighteenth century than the dissimilarity of these two metres, syllabically and in point of rhyme identical. The couplets of Marlowe, Fletcher, Shelley, and Keats follow the laws of blank verse, and add rhyme—that is to say, their periods and pauses are entirely determined by the sense. The couplets of Dryden and his followers resemble Ovid's elegiacs in the permanence of their form and the restriction of their thought. Mr. Browning, who is one of the latest and most characteristic products of the Elizabethan revival, has made good use of this loose rhyming metre in *Sordello*. Among the most melodious passages of that poem may be found the following:

You can believe
Sordello foremost in the regal class
 Nature has broadly severed from the mass
 Of men, and framed for pleasure, as she frames
 Some happy lands that have luxurious names
 For loose fertility; a foot-fall there
 Suffices to upturn to the warm air
 Half germinating spices, mere decay
 Produces richer life, and day by day
 New pollen on the lily petal grows,
 And still more labyrinthine buds the rose.

The whole structure of this period, in its pauses and studied disregard of the rhymed system, is that of blank verse. The final couplet completes the sense and satisfies the ear with regularity. Browning by fits and starts produces passages of fine blank verse, blowing out bubbles of magnificent sound as glass is blown from red-hot matter by the fierce breath and fiery will. Swinburne, when he chooses, sweeps the long purple, blows the golden trumpet, and intones the sacrificial chant of the Elizabethan hierarchy.

He is a supreme artist in words; they obey him as the keys obey an organist, and from their combination he builds up melodious palaces of resonant magnificence. Tennyson must be named the most original and greatest living writer of blank verse. The classical beauty of the *Idyls of the King*, the luxuriant eloquence of the *Princess*, the calm majesty of *Ulysses*, the idyllic sweetness of *Ænone*, the grandeur of the *Morte d'Arthur*, are monuments to the variety and scientific grasp of his genius. Subtle melody and self-restrained splendor are observable throughout his compositions. He has the power of selection and of criticism, the lack of which makes blank verse tumid or prosaic. It may be noticed that Tennyson has not only created for himself a style in narrative and descriptive blank verse, but that he has also adapted this Protean metre to lyrical purposes. Three songs in the *Princess*—"Tears, idle tears," "Now sleeps the crimson petal," and "Come down, O maid"—are perfect specimens of most melodious and complete minstrelsy in words. We observe that the first of these songs is divided into periods of five lines, each of which terminates with the words "days that are no more." This recurrence of sound and meaning is a substitute for rhyme, and suggests rhyme so persuasively that it is impossible to call the poem mere blank verse. The second song is less simple in its construction: it consists of a quatrain followed by three couplets, and succeeded by a final quatrain, each group of lines ending with the word "me." The lines are so managed, by recurrences of sound and by the restriction of the sense to separate lines, that the form of lyric verse is again imitated without aid of rhyme. Theocritus, in his *Amœbean Idyls*, had suggested this system; and Shakespeare, in the *Merchant of Venice* (act v. sc. 1), had shown what could be made of it in English. But the third song which I have mentioned depends for its effect upon no artificial structure, no reiterated sounds. The poet calls it an idyl: I think it may be referred to as a most convincing proof that the English language can be made perfectly lyrical and musical without the need of stanzas or of rhyme.

I have now passed in brief review the greatest writers of blank verse, and have tried to show that this metre, originally formed for dramatic elocution, became epical, idyllic, lyrical, didactic, according to the will of the poets who made use of it. In conclusion, I may repeat some of the points which are established with reference to the scope and purpose of the metre. It seems adapted specially for thought in evolution; it requires progression and sustained effort. As a consequence of this, its melody is determined by the sense which it contains, and depends more upon proportion and harmony of sounds than upon recurrences and regularities of structure. This being its essential character, it follows that blank verse is better suited for dialogues, descriptions, eloquent appeals, rhetorical declamations, for all those forms of poetry which imply a continuity and development of thought, than for the setting-forth of some one perfect and full-formed idea. The thought or "moment" which is sufficient for a sonnet would seem poor and fragmentary in fourteen lines of blank verse, unless they were distinctly understood to form a part of some continuous poem or dramatic dialogue. When, therefore, blank verse is used lyrically, the poet who manipulates it has to deceive the ear by structures analogous to those of rhymed stanzas. The harmony of our language is such as to admit of exquisite finish in this style; but blank verse sacrifices a portion of its characteristic freedom, and assimilates itself to another type of metrical expression, in the process. Another point about blank verse is that it admits of no mediocrity; it must be either clay or gold. Its writer gains no unreal advantage from the form of his versification, but has to produce fine thoughts in vigorous and musical language. Hence, we find that blank verse has been the metre of genius, that it is only used successfully by indubitable poets, and that it is no favorite in a mean, contracted, and unimaginative age. The freedom of the Renaissance created it in England. The freedom of our own century has reproduced it. Blank verse is a type and symbol of our national literary spirit—uncontrolled by precedent or rule, inclined to extravagance, yet reaching per-

fection at intervals by an inner force and *vivida vis* of native inspiration.

III.

THE BLANK VERSE OF MILTON.

Among the many points which connect the literature of this century with that of the Elizabethan age, there is none more marked and striking than the revival of a true feeling for the beauty of blank verse. Blank verse was the creation of our dramatists, from Marlowe to Massinger and Shirley. Milton received it at their hands; but, in appropriating this metre to the epic, even Milton thought it necessary to defend the use of unrhymed verse. Milton belonged by education and by disposition to the age which, for want of a more accurate title, has been called Elizabethan, but which may better be described as the Renaissance in England. That is to say, the spirit which gave form and life to our literature during the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries preserved its fullest vigor and manifested itself with the utmost splendor in the genius of Milton. But while he was yet alive, and by the publication of his masterpiece was proving his legitimate descent from the lineage of Spenser, Bacon, and Shakespeare, a new and antagonistic spirit began to manifest itself. The poets and prose-writers of the Restoration stood no longer in a close relation to Italy and the classics, nor did they continue the tradition of the dramatists of our renaissance. They followed French examples, and introduced another standard of taste. One of the signs of this change was their rejection of blank verse, their exclusive practice of the couplet. To some extent this was a return to old English precedents, to the rhyming metre of Chaucer and the earliest English plays. But the heroic verse, as developed by Dryden, was not a regular continuation of the tradition handed down from Chaucer and from Marlowe. It had less in common with the metre of the *Canter-*

bury Tales and *Hero and Leander* than with the French Alexandrine, and its adoption was one of the signs of the French influence which prevailed throughout the Restoration, and which determined the style of English literature for the following century.

The exchange of blank verse for the rhyming couplet was not so insignificant as at first sight it may appear. It was no mere whim of fashion or voluntary preference among the poets for one of two metres, either of which they could have used with equal mastery. On the contrary, it indicated a radical change in the spirit of our literature. With the substitution of heroic for unrhymed verse, the theory and practice of harmony in English composition were altered. What was essentially national in our poetry—the music of sustained periods, elastic in their structure, and governed by the subtlest laws of melody in recurring consonants and vowels—was sacrificed for the artificial elegance and monotonous cadence of the couplet. For a century and a half the summit of all excellence in versification was the construction of neat pairs of lines, smooth, indeed, and polished, but scarcely varying in their form. The breadth and freedom of style, the organic connection between thought and rhythm, were abandoned for precise and studied regularity; and corresponding to this restriction of the form of poetry was an impoverishment in its matter both of thought and fancy. The audacities of Shakespeare and the sublimities of Milton were no less unknown and unappreciated than the volume and the grandeur of their metrical effects. We might compare this change in the spirit of our literature to the extinction of all the architectural originality of the earlier Italian Renaissance in the formal elegance of the Palladian style. Of course it is not to be denied that much was gained as well as lost. Not to speak of the exaggerated conceits, fantastic phraseology, and faults of overstrained imagination, which were eliminated in the age of the Restoration and Queen Anne, it must always be remembered that few literatures can exhibit two types of excellence so great and yet so diverse as those of our Eliza-

bethan and classic periods. But the fact remains that during this century and a half our authors abandoned the fields in which the earliest and most splendid laurels of the English had been won, and our critics lost the sense for beauties of style peculiarly national. To have written true blank verse during the despotism of the heroic couplet would have been impossible, and to appreciate Shakespearian or Miltonic melody was equally beyond the capacities of cultivated taste. It was not until the spirit of the Elizabethan age revived in the authors of the commencement of the present century that blank verse began once more to be constructed upon proper principles, and to be accepted at its true value. Even then the habits of several generations had to be laboriously broken, and the metre which every playwright of the sixteenth century commanded with facility was used with pompous grandiosity or frigid baldness by poets even of distinguished genius.

These remarks serve merely as a preface to the following attempt to analyze the structure of Miltonic blank verse, and to explain some of the mistakes which have been made about it. Johnson's essay on the versification of Milton proves the want of intelligence which prevailed in the last century, and shows to what extent the exclusive practice of the couplet had spoiled the ears of critics for all the deeper and more subtle strains of which our language is capable. Johnson lays it down as a fixed canon that the English ten-syllable iambic measure is only pure and regular "when the accent rests upon every second syllable through the whole line." Thus such lines as these,

His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings . . .
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss, . . .

which are not of very common occurrence in Milton, and perhaps are never met with in succession, he admits as pure; while all the others—those, that is to say, in which we recognize the triumphs of Miltonic art—he condemns as "more or less licentious with respect to accent." The tender and pathetic cadence of the last line in the following passage,

This delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground,

is stigmatized by Johnson as remarkably inharmonious. Cowley's exquisite line,

And the soft wings of peace cover him round,

which exhibits a similar cadence, meets with the same condemnation, Johnson adding magisterially, with reference to both examples: "In these the law of metre is very grossly violated by mingling combinations of sound directly opposite to each other, as Milton expresses it in his sonnet to Henry Lawes, by *committing short and long*, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest." Johnson's ear, accustomed to the sing-song of the couplet, and his instinct sophisticated by a too exclusive study of classical metres, exacted an even flow of regular iambs, which might occasionally be broken, for the sake of variety, by lines confessedly discordant. A superfluous syllable at rare intervals, or a trochee instead of an iamb in the first place, would be enough, he thought, to satisfy human weakness petulantly craving after change; then the metre should resume its calculated melody, and march on without interruption for a score or so of lines. But a trochee in the fourth place! (for so he scanned the lines), O Milton and Cowley! shame upon your ears! The ferule was raised, and down it came with a swinging blow upon the knuckles of the poets who had neglected their prosody. Johnson need not be followed through the details of his analysis. The canon already quoted is enough to prove how far he was from having discerned the true principles of criticism in this case. He attempted to reduce blank verse to rule by setting up the standard of an ideal line, any deviation whatever from which was to be called "licentious, impure, unharmonious," remaining ignorant the while that the whole effect of this metre depends upon the massing of lines in periods and on the variety of complicated cadences. Among other things, he had not perhaps considered that the

fourth place in a ten-syllabled iambic is not the same as the fourth place in a line of twelve syllables.

Todd, commenting on Johnson's essay, shows a truer appreciation of Miltonic melody, and is properly indignant with the cool arrogance of Aristarchus. But he, too, is far from having perceived the laws which determine the structure of blank verse. After observing that "Milton was fond of the ancient measures," which indeed is true, he goes on to settle some of the lines that puzzled Johnson, thus: "These lines exhibit choriambics in the third and fourth, and in the fourth and fifth places:

For us too large, whēre thŷ ābūndance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls tō thē grōund."

He thinks that he has answered Johnson and established something positive by his erudition *in re metricā*, whereas he has only attained the negative result of demonstrating that blank verse must not be considered a mere sequence of iambi. It does not really satisfy any one to be told that two fifths of each of these lines is what Horace might have called a choriambus, or that three tenths of some other line is an anapæst. Johnson, to begin with, would not have been satisfied; for he required iambi or their equivalents, and critics like Todd think nothing of scanning an anapæst in the place of one of Johnson's feet. Nor can the classical scholar be satisfied; for, even granting that English metrical feet may be classified as tribrachs, dactyls, anapæsts, choriambics, and so forth, there is no classical precedent for versification which indiscriminately admitted all these kinds. The Greek comic metre is the only parallel of anything like closeness; and, even there, limits were fixed beyond which the poet dared not venture. Such licenses as Milton allowed himself in his sublime epic would have been inadmissible in the dialogue of the *Frogs*, and would have been utterly abhorrent to the laws of the Sophoclean iambic. The unlearned English reader meanwhile will justly condemn this talk about anapæsts and choriambi as inappropriate. It cannot help him to perceive the melody of a line

to be told "here is a trochee," or "there I think I detect an amphibrach;" for although these terms may usefully be employed between students accustomed to metrical analysis, they do not solve the problem of blank verse. With classical versification the case is different. Quantity determines every line; a long syllable is unmistakable, and invariably weighs as equal in the scale against two short ones. But nothing so definite can be established in English metre. What one man reads as a dactyl may seem like an anapaest or a tribrach to another. So little is our language subject to the laws of quantity, that to have produced four stanzas of decently correct English alcaics is one of the proudest *tours de force* of the most ingenious of our versifiers since Pope. Since, therefore, quantity forms no part at present of our prosody, and since the licenses of quantity in blank verse can never have been determined, it is plainly not much to the purpose to talk about choriambes in Milton. They are undoubtedly to be found there. Our daily speech is larded with trochees and cretics and so forth. But these names of classic feet do not explain the secret of the varied melody of Milton. In order to show the uncertainty which attends the analysis of blank verse on these principles, it is enough to mention that Sir Egerton Brydges scans the line already quoted thus:

"Pärtā | kērs, ānd | ūncrōpt | fālls tō thē | grōund—

"first, an iambic; second, an iambic; third, a spondee; fourth, a dactyl; fifth, a demifoot." He makes no mention of the choriamb, which seemed so evident to Todd; while Keightley, who has written learnedly in the same spirit, seems to reject spondees from his system.

Though the attempt to apply the phraseology of Greek and Latin prosody to the analysis of blank verse is not really satisfactory, yet the principle of substitution of other feet for iambs, asserted by Todd, Brydges, and Keightley, in opposition to Johnson, was a step forward. They defend Milton's irregularities by saying that in the place of two iambs he uses one choriambus,

and that he employs trochees, anapæsts, and tribrachs, under certain limitations, as freely as iambs. If these critics had advanced beyond the nomenclature of classic prosody, this principle of substitution would probably have led to a better understanding of the matter. English blank verse really consists of periods of lines, each one of which is made up normally of ten syllables, a stress or accent being thrown upon the final syllable in the line, so that the whole inclines to the iambic rather than to any other rhythm. The ten syllables are, also, if normally cadenced, so disposed that five beats occur in the verse at regular intervals. So far Johnson was right; but he went wrong the instant he proceeded to declare that deviation from this ideal structure of the line produced an inharmonious result. In truth, it is precisely such deviation that constitutes the beauty of blank verse. When the metre was first practised by Surrey, Sackville, Greene, and Peele, great hesitation was displayed as to any departure from iambic regularity; but Marlowe, the earliest poet of creative genius who applied himself to its cultivation, saw that in order to save the verse from monotony it was necessary to shift the accent, and, playing freely with feet properly so called, to be only careful to preserve the right proportions and masses of sound. A verse may often have more than ten syllables, and more or less than five accents; but it must carry so much sound as shall be a satisfactory equivalent for ten syllables, and must have its accents so arranged as to content an ear prepared for five. There are thirteen syllables, and who shall exactly say how many accents, in this line?

Ruining along the illimitable inane;

yet it quite fulfils the conditions of a good blank verse. The ponderous

Showers, hails, snows, frosts, and two-edged winds that prime,

which has perhaps seven accents, is as legitimate as the light and rapid

Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts.

The secret of complex and melodious blank verse lies in preserving the balance and proportion of syllables, while varying their accent and their relative weight and volume, so that each line in a period shall carry its proper burden of sound, but the burden shall be differently distributed in the successive verses. This is done by sometimes allowing two syllables to take the time of one, and sometimes extending one syllable to the length of two, by forcing the accentuation of prominent monosyllables and gliding over successive liquid sounds, by packing one line with emphatic words so as to retard its movement, by winging another with light and hurried polysyllables, and by so adapting words to sense, and sense to rhythm, that pauses, prolongations, and accelerations, absolutely necessary for the understanding of the matter, evoke a cadence of apparently unstudied melody. In this prosody the bars of the musical composer, where different values from the breve to the demisemiquaver find their place, suggest perhaps a truer basis of measurement than the longs and shorts of classic quantity. The following line from Milton (*Paradise Regained*, iii. 256),

The one winding, the other straight, and left between,

affords a good instance of what is meant by the massing of sounds together, so as to produce a whole harmonious to the ear, but beyond the reach of satisfactory analysis by feet. It is not an Alexandrine, though, if we read it syllabically, it may be made to seem to have six feet. Two groups of syllables—

The one winding, | the other straight—

take up the time of six syllables, and the verse falls at the end into the legitimate iambic cadence. At the same time it would no doubt be possible, by the application of a Procrustean method of elisions and forcible divisions, to reduce it to an inexact iambic, thus :

Th' one wind | ing, th' oth | er straight.

This instance suggests the consideration of another point all-

important in the prosody of blank verse. It is clear that in the line just quoted the sense helps the sound, and leads the ear to mass the first eight syllables into the two groups requisite for the rhythm of the verse. And this is not only once or occasionally, but always and invariably, the case in all blank verse composed with proper freedom. In this respect the metre is true to its original purpose. It was formed for the drama, where it had to be the plastic vehicle of every utterance, and where a perfectly elastic adaptation of the rhythm to the current of the sense was indispensable. The irregularities in its structure were the natural result of emphasis. This is illustrated by a line of Marlowe, as admirable for its energy of movement as for its imagery—

See where Christ's blood *streams* in the firmament.

That violent stress upon the verb was illegitimate according to iambic scansion; but the verb required emphasis, and the verse gained rather than lost by the deviation from its even rise and fall. The one sound rule to be given to the readers of dramatic blank verse, written by a master of the art, is this—Attend strictly to the sense and to the pauses; the lines will then be perfectly melodious; but if you attempt to scan the lines on any preconceived metrical system, you will violate the sense and vitiate the music. Even the abstruse and fantastic audacities of Webster, who is the veriest Schumann of blank verse, melt into melody when subjected to this simple process. If one does but conceive the dramatic situation, sympathize with the passions of the speaker, allow for the natural inflections of his voice, mark his pauses, and interpolate his inarticulate exclamations, the whole apparently disjointed mass of words assumes a proper and majestic cadence. Milton took blank verse from the dramatists, and practised dramatic blank verse in *Comus*; nor in his epic did he depart from the rules of composition we have analyzed. The movement of the sense invariably controlled the rhythm of the verse; and most of his amorphous lines take form when treated as the products of

dramatic art. The following, for example, is one of those that puzzled Johnson, although it is comparatively regular :

'Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate.

Johnson, searching for iambs, had not gazed into the fallen Archangel's face—his disguise thrown off, his policy abandoned—nor heard the low slow accents of the two first syllables, the proud emphasis upon the fourth, the stately and melancholy music-roll which closed the line. Yet, in order to understand the rhythm of the verse as the poet wrote it, it was necessary to have heard and seen the fiend as Milton heard and saw. The same may be said about the spasms of intense emotion which have to be imagined in order to give its metrical value to this verse—

Me, me only, just object of his ire.

It is obvious here that scansion by feet will be of little use, though we may grant that the line opens with a spondee followed by a trochee. Its intention is understood as soon as we allow the time of two whole syllables to the first emphatic "me," and bring over the next words, "me only," in the time of another two syllables, by doing which we give dramatic energy to the utterance. The truth of this method is still more evident when we take for analysis a verse from the eighth book of *Paradise Lost*, at first sight singularly inharmonious :

Submit ; he reared me, and, "Whom thou soughtest I am."

Try to scan the line, and it seems a confusion of uncertain feet. Read it over by itself, and its packed consonants offend the ear. But now supply the context—

Rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submit ; he reared me, and, "Whom thou soughtest I am,"
Said mildly, "Author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee, or beneath."—*P. L.*, viii. 319.

It is now seen that the word "submit" belongs by the sense to the

preceding period; the words "he reared me," are a parenthesis of quick and hurried narration; then another period commences. So dependent is sound on sense, and so inextricably linked together are the periods in a complex structure of blank verse. It not unfrequently happens that a portion at least of the sound belonging to a word at the commencement of a verse is owed to the cadence of the preceding lines, so that the strain of music which begins is wedded to that which dies, by indescribable and almost imperceptible interpenetrations. The rhythmic dance may therefore be prolonged through sequences and systems of melody, each perfect in itself, each owing and lending something to that which follows and which went before, through concords and affinities of modulated sound.

Notwithstanding the pliancy of the method here suggested for the explanation of Miltonic verse, it is not easy to see the right rhythm of some few of his lines. The following present peculiar difficulties, since at first they seem like Alexandrines; and yet Milton's ear cannot be accused of letting an Alexandrine pass, nor again have they the right Alexandrine pause; while the striking similarity in the endings of these abnormal verses suggests at least some method in their irregularity:

Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.—*P. L.*, viii. 216.

For solitude sometimes is best society.—*P. L.*, ix. 249.

Such solitude before choicest society.—*P. R.*, i. 302.

And linked itself by carnal sensuality.—*Comus*, p. 474.

The last instance, which is at once explained by pronouncing "sensuality" as if it had but three syllables—*sensual'ty*—gives perhaps the key to the others. Though the English usage of words in *iety* precludes their elision to the extent required, we must imagine that Milton sometimes gave to such words as *satiety* and *society* the value of three syllables by treating the *ie* almost as if it were a diphthong. The words would then stand at the end of the lines, each forming a full foot, followed by the licensed redundant syllable. It must, however, be mentioned that, in *Paradise Lost* at

least, Milton does not often make use of the hendecasyllabic line, and also that in two instances (*Paradise Lost*, viii. 383, and ix. 1007) he uses *society* as a quadrisyllable. The ordinary way of explaining such lines is to say that they have two syllables redundant, which is of course a statement of the fact. But here a difficulty which often meets us in English scansion, owing to the different values given at different times to the same word, has to be faced. *Society* will play its part as two good feet in one line, and in another will have to do service as a single foot or its equivalent. The phenomenon is common enough in dramatic blank verse, where accelerated and vehement enunciation justifies it.

It may here be remarked that Milton's familiarity with what he calls the "various-measured verse" of the ancient poets, and with the liquid numbers of the Italian hendecasyllable, determined, to some extent, his treatment of our blank verse. The variety of cadence and elaborate structure of Virgil's hexameters no doubt incited him to emulation. He must have felt that the unencumbered eloquence, which is suited to the drama, where perspicuity is indispensable, would be out of place in the stationary and sonorous epic. Therefore, without seeking to reconstruct in English the metres of the ancients, he adapted the complex harmonies of the Roman poets to the qualities of our language. Like Virgil, he opened his paragraphs in the middle of a line, sustaining them through several clauses, till they reached their close in another hemistich at the distance of some half a dozen carefully conducted verses. His pauses, therefore, are of the greatest importance in regulating his music. From the Italians, again, he learned some secrets in the distribution of equivalent masses of sound. Milton's elisions, and other so-called irregularities, have affinities with the prosody of Dante; for while the normal Italian hendecasyllable runs thus,

Mo su, mo giù, e mo ricirculando,

the poet of the *Inferno* dares to write—

Bestemmiavano Iddio e i lor parenti;

which is an audacity on a level with many of Milton's.

Two elements of harmony in verse remain to be considered, each of which constitutes a large portion of Milton's music, and without which his pompons rhythm would often be hard and frigid. These are alliteration and assonance. Alliteration is the repetition of the same consonant at the beginning of words in a sentence. Assonance is the repetition of the same vowel in words which do not rhyme strictly. It is well known that the Northern nations employed alliteration and not rhyme as the element of melody in poetry. The Vision of Piers Ploughman, for example, is written in a metre of which this is a specimen :

In habit as a harmot unholy of works
Went wide in the world wonders to hear.

Assonance, again, is used by the Spanish poets in the place of the fuller rhyme required by our ear. Words like *pain* and *flare* are assonantal. The brief mention of these facts proves that alliteration and assonance can satisfy the craving for repeated sounds in poetry to which modern ears are subject ; since each of them has taken the place of rhyme in systematically cultivated literatnres. It cannot be denied that the sing-song jingle of the alliterative couplet just quoted is intolerable to an educated sense ; and it is on this account that alliteration has fallen into general disrepute. Nothing is easier than to turn it to ridicule. When Shakespeare, in *Love's Labor's Lost*, made Master Holofernes say—

I will something affect the letter, for it argues facility ;
The preylful princess pierced and pricked a pretty pleasing pricket,

he threw contempt upon the vulgar and illiterate abusers of an ornament they did not understand. Nothing, again, is easier than to make verses that skip or hobble on alliterative crutches. Our ears are wearied with periods like the following :

Creeps through a throbbing light that grows and glows
From glare to greater glare, until it gluts,
And gulfs him in.

Yet in spite of all this the lofty muse of Milton owes no small

portion of her charm to this adornment. In order to understand the Miltonic use of alliteration, it must be remarked that the faults of the verses just quoted are due to the alliteration being forced upon the ear. It is loud and strident, not flattering the sense by delicate suggestion and subtle echoes of recurring sound, but taking it by storm, and strumming, as it were, relentlessly upon one nerve. In good alliterative structures the letters chime in at intervals: two or three consonantal sounds are started together, and their recurrences are interwoven like the rhymes in *terza rima*. Here is an instance:

Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
 Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
 Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.—*P. L.*, ii. 582.

Here the letters *f* and *l* predominate; but they are assisted by alliterations of *s* and *r* and *w* and *g*. Next, it may be shown that really melodious alliteration owes much to medial and final as well as to initial consonants, and also to the admixture of cognate letters, such as *p* or *t* in structures where *b* or *d* predominate. The first of these points is illustrated by a strongly alliterative passage in *Paradise Lost* (v. 322), where, however, it must be admitted that Milton has erred into alliterative monotony:

Small store will serve, where store,
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes.

It will here be noticed that the sibilants, wherever they occur, whether at the beginning, the middle, or the end of the words, are felt. It is rare to find a structure of repeated *s* in Milton.* Some letters lend themselves more than others to harmonious alliteration, and Milton shows decided preference for *f*, *l*, *m*, *r*, and *w*. *D*

* See, however, *P. L.*, vii. 295.

and *h* are letters which he uses not always with melodious effect, as in the following passage :

But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled heaven,
My damage fondly deemed, I can repair
That detriment.—*P. L.*, vii. 150.

We may compare, with the two examples just given, those in which mere liquid sounds are employed, even though profusely, so as to observe how far more delicate is the music of the verse. Here is a sequence of *f* and *l* :

Fairer than feigned of old, or fabled since
Of faery damsels, met in forests wide
By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,
Lancelot or Pelleas or Pellenore.—*P. R.*, ii. 358.

Here is one in which *w* predominates :

Sails between worlds and worlds with steady wing,
Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom air ; till within soar
Of towering eagles to all the fowls he seems
A phoenix.—*P. L.*, v. 268.

Three other instances of very marked alliteration may be pointed out, to prove the frequency of repeated sounds which Milton sometimes allowed himself. They are as follows :

War wearied hath performed what war can do,
And to disordered rage let loose the reins,
With mountains as with weapons armed, which makes
Wild work in heaven and dangerous to the main.—*P. L.*, vi. 695.

But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodopé, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture.—*P. L.*, vii. 32.

Moon that now meetest the orient sun, now fliest,
With the fixed stars, fixed in their orb that flies ;
And ye five other wandering fires, that move
In mystic dance not without song.—*P. L.*, v. 175.

To these may be added *Paradise Lost*, vi. 37–55, a fine instance of interlinked alliterations, *f, r, l, m, p, b*, determining the structure; while in *Paradise Lost* (vi. 386–405) we find a similar system of *d, f, r, p, v*. The famous passage at the end of the fifth book, which describes the retirement of Abdiel from the rebel army, exhibits splendid alliterative qualities in combination with Milton's favorite sequence of adjectives beginning with *un*.

Another point, besides the interlacement of sounds and intervention of subsidiary letters, which have been already mentioned, characterizes the alliteration of Milton. He confines his alliterative systems to periods of sense and metrical construction. When the period is closed, and the thought which it conveys has been expressed, the predominant letter is dropped. Thus there subsists an intimate connection between the metrical melody and the alliterative harmony, both aiding the rhetorical development of the sense. It consequently often happens that the alliteration is descriptive or picturesque, as in the lines about the Parthian bowmen:

Flying behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
Of their pursuers.—*P. R.*, iii. 323. (Compare *P. L.*, vi. 211–213.)

The descriptive pomp of the alliterative system is more remarkable in the passage where Raphael relates the division of earth from water:

Immediately the mountains huge appear,
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky,
So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters. Thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, up-rolled,
As drops on dust conglobing, from the dry;
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste; such flight the great command impressed
On the swift floods. As armies at the call
Of trumpet—for of armies thou hast heard—
Troop to their standard, so the watery throng,

Wave rolling after wave, where way they found;
 If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
 Soft-ebbing: nor withstood them rock or hill;
 But they, or underground, or circuit wide
 With serpent error wandering, found their way,
 And on the washy ooze deep channels wore.

—*P. L.*, vii. 285–303.

Here the letters *b* and *h*, not inaptly, mark the firmness and resistance of the earth, while *w* and *r* depict the liquid lapse of waters.

Enough, perhaps, has now been said to prove that the harmony of Milton's verse depends very greatly upon alliteration; and here it may be observed that he not unfrequently repeats the same word, as much with a view to the recurrence of sound as with a rhetorical intention. In *Paradise Regained* (iii. 109) there is a period of twelve lines in which we find the word *glory* eight times repeated, and the alliteration strengthened by five subsidiary *g*'s. At the 205th line of the same book, there is a period of six verses containing *worse* five times, supported by three subsidiary *w*'s. In each of these cases the repetition is of course rhetorically studied. A very remarkable instance of the grandeur resulting from simple reiteration is the following:

If I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault;
 Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.—*P. L.*, iii. 117.

The assonance of various forms of the *o* sound adds to the volume of the music in these lines.

Assonance, though not so obvious as alliteration, is no less potent. Of its place in Milton's versification something must be said.* To begin with, the poet was himself very sensitive to the harmony of vowel sounds when well pronounced. In his Epistle to Master Hartlib, he lays it down as a rule that, in the education of youths, "their speech is to be fashioned to a distinct and clear pronunciation, as near as may be to the Italian, especially in the

* This also would be the place to discuss the occasional rhymes found in Milton's blank verse. *P. L.*, xi. 853–860, has no less than six assonantal endings. See, too, *P. L.*, iv. 957; *P. L.*, i. 612.

vowels. For we Englishmen, being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a Southern tongue," etc. His blank verse abounds in open-mouthed, deep-chested *a*'s and *o*'s. Here is a passage in which their assonance is all the more remarkable from the absence of alliteration :

Say, Goddess, what ensued when Raphael,
 The affable Archangel, had forewarned
 Adam, by dire example, to beware
 Apostasy, by what befell in Heaven
 To those apostates ; lest the like befall
 In Paradise to Adam or his race,
 Charged not to touch the interdicted tree, etc.
 —*P. L.*, vii. 40.

The opening lines of Book ii., the passage about Mulciber at the end of Book i., and the great symphonious period which describes the movement of the fallen angels "to the Dorian mood of flutes and soft recorders," all serve to illustrate the gorgeousness of Milton's assonance. In attempting to characterize the effect of these deep-toned vowels, it is almost necessary to borrow words from the art of colors, since what colors are to painting vowels are to verse. It would seem, after drinking in draught after draught of these intoxicating melodies, as if Milton with unerring tact had selected from the English language only such words as are pompous, full-sounding, capable of being wrought into the liquid architecture of articulate music. Discord, who is so busy in the lines of even mighty poets, stands apart and keeps silence here. That tenuity of sound and want of volume from which the periods of otherwise great versifiers occasionally suffer never occurs in Milton. Like Virgil he is unerringly and unremittingly harmonious. Music is the element in which his genius lives, just as light is the element of Pindar, or as darkness covers the *Inferno* like a pall.

Having attempted an analysis of the melody of Milton's blank verse, it remains to speak about the changes which may be traced in it from the date of *Comus* to that of *Samson Agonistes*. Co-

mus, as might have been expected, both from the time of its composition and its form, is the one of Milton's masterpieces in which he has adhered most closely to the traditions of the Elizabethan drama. His style, it is true, is already more complex and peculiarly harmonious, more characteristically Miltonic than that of any of the dramatists. Yet there are passages in *Comus* which remind us forcibly of Fletcher. Others, like the following—

How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty vaulted night!
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled—

might have been written by Shakespeare. Alliteration is used freely, but more after the manner of Fletcher or of Spenser, not with the sustained elaboration of Milton's maturity. The truly Miltonic licenses are rare. We find fewer inverted sentences, less lengthy systems of concatenated periods—in a word, a more fluent and simpler versification. Both in the imagery and the melody of *Comus* there is youthful freshness, an almost wanton display of vernal bloom and beauty. In the *Paradise Lost* we reach the manhood of the art of Milton. His elaborate metrical structure, supported by rich alliteration and assonance, here attains its full development. Already, too, there is more of rugged and abrupt sublimity in the blank verse of the *Paradise Lost* than can be found in that of *Comus*. The metre, learned in the school of the Elizabethan drama, is being used in accordance with the models of the Roman Epic. Yet the fancy of the poet has not yet grown chill or lost luxuriance, nor has his ear become less sensitive to every musical modulation of which our language is capable. *Paradise Regained* presents a marked change. Except in descriptive passages, there is but little alliterative melody; while all the harsh inversions and rugged eccentricities of abnormally constructed verses are retained. It is noticeable that hendecasyllabic lines, which are but sparingly used in *Paradise Lost*, only two occurring in the first book, become frequent in *Paradise Regained*, and add

considerably to the heaviness of its movement. These, for example, are found within a short space in the first book :

One day forth walked alone, the Spirit leading . . .
Awakened in me swarm, while I consider . . .
These gnawing thoughts my mother soon perceiving . . .
A star not seen before in heaven appearing . . .

No doubt there are admirers of Milton who would not allow that the metrical changes in *Paradise Regained* are for the worse. Yet it is hardly to be denied that, in comparison with the *Paradise Lost*, much of richness, variety, sonorousness, and liquid melody has been sacrificed. *Samson Agonistes* is a step beyond *Paradise Regained* in dryness, ruggedness, and uncompromising severity. The blank verse is shorn of alliterative and assonantal harmony, except in the last speech of Manoah, and in a few of the more pensive passages scattered up and down the drama. Still it displays every form of the true Miltonic metre in so far as audacities of accent and accumulations of compacted syllables are concerned. To the lover of the most exalted poetry, *Samson Agonistes*, even as regards its versification, may possibly offer a pleasure more subtle and more rare than *Paradise Lost*, with all its full-toned harmonies. It has the grandeur of a play of Sophocles which, after passing through the medium of the Latin genius, has been committed to English by the loftiest of modern poets in austere old age. *Comus* shows the style of the master in his earliest manhood, with the luxuriance of an untamed youth, the labyrinthine blossoms of an unpruned fancy. *Paradise Lost* exhibits the same richness, mellowed by age and subordinated to the laws of abstruse and deeply studied proportion. In *Paradise Regained* the master has grown older, and his taste is more severe. In *Samson Agonistes* color and melody have lost their charm for him, though he preserves his mighty style, restraining it within limits prescribed by a taste ascetically grave. In *Comus* we have the glowing hues of a Giorgione, with a comparatively weak design. In *Paradise Lost* the design of a Michael Angelo is added to the coloring of a Titian. In *Paradise Regained* both color and design are of the

great Florentine. In *Samson Agonistes* the design is still that of Michael Angelo; but the picture is executed *en grisaille*, in severest chiaroscuro, careful only of the form. Fortunately we know the dates of Milton's masterpieces. There is, therefore, no uncertainty or subjectivity of criticism in the analysis of these changes in his manner; at the same time they are precisely what we might have expected *a priori*—the intellectual gaining on the sensual qualities of art as the poet advanced in age.

NOTE ON THE *ORFEO*.

See vol. i. p. 177.

POLIZIANO'S *Orfeo* was dedicated to Messer Carlo Canale, the husband of that famous Vannozza who bore Lucrezia and Cesare Borgia to Alexander VI. As first published in 1494, and as republished from time to time up to the year 1776, it carried the title of *La Favola di Orfeo*, and was not divided into acts. Frequent stage-directions sufficed, as in the case of Florentine "Sacre Rappresentazioni," for the indication of the scenes. In this earliest redaction of the *Orfeo* the chorus of the Dryads, the part of Mnesillus, the lyrical speeches of Proserpine and Pluto, and the first lyric of the Mænads are either omitted or represented by passages in *ottava rima*. In the year 1776, the Padre Ireneo Affò printed at Venice a new version of "*Orfeo*, Tragedia di Messer Angelo Poliziano," collated by him from two MSS. This play is divided into five acts, severally entitled "Pastoricus," "Nymphas Habet," "Heroïcus," "Necromanticus," and "Bacchanalis." The stage-directions are given partly in Latin, partly in Italian; and instead of the "Announcement of the Feast" by Mercury, a prologue consisting of two octave stanzas is appended. A Latin Sapphic ode in praise of the Cardinal Gonzaga, which was interpolated in the first version, is omitted, and certain changes are made in the last soliloquy of Orpheus. There is little doubt, I think, that the second version, first given to the press by the Padre Affò, was Poliziano's own recension of his earlier composition. I have, therefore, followed it in the main, except that I have not thought it necessary to observe the somewhat pedantic division into acts, and have preferred to use the original "Announcement of the Feast," which proves the integral connec-

tion between this ancient secular play and the Florentine Mystery or "Sacra Rappresentazione." The last soliloquy of Orpheus, again, has been freely translated by me from both versions for reasons which will be obvious to students of the original. I have yet to make a remark upon one detail of my translation. In line 390 (part of the first lyric of the Mænads), the Italian gives us

Spezzata come il fabbro il cribro spezza.

This means literally "Riven as a blacksmith rives a sieve or boulder." Now sieves are made in Tuscany of a plate of iron, pierced with holes; and the image would therefore be familiar to an Italian. I have, however, preferred to translate thus:

Riven as woodmen fir-trees rive,

instead of giving

Riven as blacksmiths boulders rive,

because I thought that the second and faithful version would be unintelligible as well as unpoetical for English readers.

EIGHT SONNETS OF PETRARCH.

ON THE PAPAL COURT AT AVIGNON.

FOUNTAIN of woe! Harbor of endless ire!
Thou school of errors, haunt of heresies!
Once Rome, now Babylon, the world's disease,
That maddenest men with fears and fell desire!
O forge of fraud! O prison dark and dire,
Where dies the good, where evil breeds increase!
Thou living Hell! Wonders will never cease
If Christ rise not to purge thy sins with fire.
Founded in chaste and humble poverty,
Against thy founders thou dost raise thy horn,
Thou shameless harlot! And whence flows this pride?
Even from foul and loathed adultery,
The wage of lewdness. Constantine, return!
Not so: the felon world its fate must bide.

TO STEFANO COLONNA.

WRITTEN FROM VAUCLUSE.

Glorious Colonna, thou on whose high head
Rest all our hopes and the great Latin name,
Whom from the narrow path of truth and fame
The wrath of Jove turned not with stormful dread:
Here are no palace-courts, no stage to tread;
But pines and oaks the shadowy valleys fill
Between the green fields and the neighboring hill,
Where musing oft I climb by fancy led.
These lift from earth to heaven our soaring soul,
While the sweet nightingale, that in thick bowers
Through darkness pours her wail of tuneful woe,
Doth bend our charmed breast to love's control;
But thou alone hast marred this bliss of ours,
Since from our side, dear lord, thou needs must go.

IN VITA DI MADONNA LAURA. XI.

ON LEAVING AVIGNON.

Backward at every weary step and slow
 These limbs I turn which with great pain I bear;
 Then take I comfort from the fragrant air
 That breathes from thee, and sighing onward go.
 But when I think how joy is turned to woe,
 Remembering my short life and whence I fare,
 I stay my feet for anguish and despair,
 And cast my tearful eyes on earth below.
 At times amid the storm of misery
 This doubt assails me: how frail limbs and poor
 Can severed from their spirit hope to live.
 Then answers Love: Hast thou no memory
 How I to lovers this great guerdon give,
 Free from all human bondage to endure?

IN VITA DI MADONNA LAURA. XII.

THOUGHTS IN ABSENCE.

The wrinkled sire with hair like winter snow
 Leaves the beloved spot where he hath passed his years,
 Leaves wife and children, dumb with bitter tears,
 To see their father's tottering steps and slow.
 Dragging his aged limbs with weary woe,
 In these last days of life he nothing fears,
 But with stout heart his fainting spirit cheers,
 And spent and wayworn forward still doth go;
 Then comes to Rome, following his heart's desire,
 To gaze upon the portraiture of Him
 Whom yet he hopes in heaven above to see:
 Thus I, alas! my seeking spirit tire,
 Lady, to find in other features dim
 The longed for, loved, true lineaments of thee.

IN VITA DI MADONNA LAURA. LII.

OH THAT I HAD WINGS LIKE A DOVE!

I am so tired beneath the ancient load
Of my misdeeds and custom's tyranny,
That much I fear to fail upon the road
And yield my soul unto mine enemy.
'Tis true a friend from whom all splendor flowed,
To save me came with matchless courtesy:
Then flew far up from sight to heaven's abode,
So that I strive in vain his face to see.
Yet still his voice reverberates here below:
O ye who labor, lo! the path is here;
Come unto me if none your going stay!
What grace, what love, what fate surpassing fear
Shall give me wings like dove's wings soft as snow,
That I may rest and raise me from the clay?

IN MORTE DI MADONNA LAURA. XXIV.

The eyes whereof I sang my fervid song,
The arms, the hands, the feet, the face benign,
Which severed me from what was rightly mine,
And made me sole and strange amid the throng,
The crisped curls of pure gold beautiful,
And those angelic smiles which once did shine
Imparadising earth with joy divine,
Are now a little dust—dumb, deaf, and dull.
And yet I live! wherefore I weep and wail,
Left alone without the light I loved so long,
Storm-tossed upon a bark that hath no sail.
Then let me here give o'er my amorous song;
The fountains of old inspiration fail,
And naught but woe my dolorous chords prolong.

IN MORTE DI MADONNA LAURA. XXXIV.

In thought I raised me to the place where she
 Whom still on earth I seek and find not, shines ;
 There 'mid the souls whom the third sphere confines,
 More fair I found her and less proud to me.
 She took my hand and said : Here shalt thou be
 With me ensphered, unless desires mislead ;
 Lo ! I am she who made thy bosom bleed,
 Whose day ere eve was ended utterly :
 My bliss no mortal heart can understand ;
 Thee only do I lack, and that which thou
 So loved, now left on earth, my beauteous veil.
 Ah ! wherefore did she cease and loose my hand ?
 For at the sound of that celestial tale
 I all but stayed in Paradise till now.

IN MORTE DI MADONNA LAURA. LXXIV.

The flower of angels and the spirits blest,
 Burghers of heaven, on that first day when she
 Who is my lady died, around her pressed
 Fulfilled with wonder and with piety.
 What light is this ? What beauty manifest ?
 Marvelling they cried : for such supremacy
 Of splendor in this age to our high rest
 Hath never soared from earth's obscurity.
 She, glad to have exchanged her spirit's place,
 Consorts with those whose virtues most exceed ;
 At times the while she backward turns her face
 To see me follow—seems to wait and plead :
 Therefore toward heaven my will and soul I raise,
 Because I hear her praying me to speed.

THE END.

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